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IDENTIFYING THE CORE ELEMENTS OF DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERS IN
A COLLEGE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

THESIS

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Science in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the University of
Kentucky

By

Megan Elaine Tennison

Lexington, Kentucky

Director: Dr. Patricia Dyk

Lexington, Kentucky

2016

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ABSTRACT OF THESIS

IDENTIFYING THE CORE ELEMENTS OF DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERS IN A COLLEGE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

Within the university system, student organizations have historically had multiple positive influences on the students who choose to participate in them. This study looked at a particular banner organization in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment at the University of Kentucky. Using the Social Change Model of Leadership Development theory as a backbone, a survey was created to evaluate the impact UK CAFE Ambassador Program has on its participants, as well as to identify avenues for improvement. This is a program that seeks to represent the college through recruitment and to develop student leaders through soft skill building. After surveying current and past ambassadors, there is overwhelming evidence that the UK CAFE Ambassador Program has positively impacted the students whether it was through skills building, networking, or college experience.

KEYWORDS: Student Ambassadors, Skill Development, Student Leaders, Social Change Model of Leadership Development, Program Evaluation

Megaw E. Lennison

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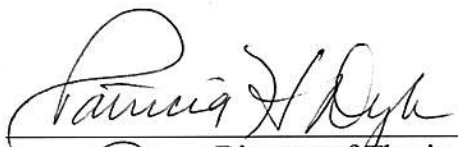
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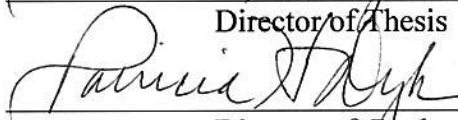
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Date

Dedicated to those who have believed in me
and have encouraged me to not give up.

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Chapter One – Introduction

Background

Student organizations are challenged with creating an environment where students have the chance to increase their knowledge about leadership and learn how to become a leader. They help build numerous skills that are beneficial in the classroom setting, as well as beyond in the professional setting. Throughout the research done on college students, it is clear that getting involved on campus is the best way to create a positively impactful life experience (Astin, 1999; Montelongo, 2002; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). Alexander Astin (1999) has been at the forefront in various student services studies that include his Theory of Involvement which advocates that students learn by becoming involved. This theory has led to an increased interest to scholars like Pascarella and Terenzini (1991), who have specifically examined how involvement is impacting the students, and how it leads to developing critical life skills. Skills that are cultured in student organizations such as leadership, effective communication, collaboration, etc. are all things that will not only benefit someone on a personal level, but it will also benefit the university on an organizational level (Winston et al., 1997). Becoming a leader is one of those life skills that college students have the chance to gain while participating in student organizations, a skill that is also important in the future workplace.

Overview of Theoretical Background

A growing body of literature forecasts a positive outlook for college students who choose to engage in activities outside of the classroom. Evidence has shown that those who take advantage of participating in student organizations grow personally, intellectually, physically, and emotionally, and are not only more satisfied with their

college experience but they are also well prepared for life after college (Winston et al., 1997). College students are presented with a unique set of opportunities that can foster academic and personal development. These opportunities can vary, as a literature review by Moore and colleagues (Moore, Lovell, McGann, & Wyrick, J., 1998) have clarified that the type of involvement impacts the experience of each student differently. These researchers found that various types of student involvement may influence the learning and development experiences of each student differently (Moore et al., 1998).

Developing multiple skills in diverse settings challenges college students to fulfill an important role as a contributor to their community. Looking forward into the future of developing student leaders, the researchers have created important guidelines for student affairs administrators to establishment meaningful and efficient organizations.

Leadership development is now a prevalent topic in the academic setting because of the consistent and strong support it has shown in creating benefits and values within the students and the colleges that support them. A collaboration of student affairs professionals created a leadership model that measures socially responsible leadership, which is defined as a value-based process that has purpose and involves collaboration, to lead to positive social change (Komives & Wagner, 2009). The Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM) model is consistent with the emerging leadership paradigm and was created specifically for college students (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Although this model looks at values that are developed within a student who is looking to promote change in a community, the foundation of the SCM approaches leadership as an element that can be interpreted with developing certain skills as well. Applying the background of this model to evaluate a student organization not only benefits the students

but also the college administrators, which enables immediate stakeholders to see how crucial ambassador organizations are for enhancing the image of the college and for developing student leaders.

Overview of the UK CAFE Ambassador Program

There is no shortage of literature that addresses the importance of student organizations and how they are essential for personal development. Where research has struggled to progress in is with evaluations of specific types of organizations and how they contribute to the development of students. The UK CAFE Ambassador Program is a particular type of student organization that consists of “a highly select group of men and women dedicated to enhancing the image of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment (CAFE) and the University of Kentucky (UK), who are nominated by professors, faculty, staff and their peers” (UK CAFE Ambassador Handbook, 2015, p. 2). Evaluating the components of this student organization will be beneficial to all of the stakeholders involved: selected ambassadors, college faculty, the surrounding community, and prospective students. Also, this evaluation supports the future of the program, as it seeks to continuously improve its responsibilities and efforts. Understanding the key components of this organization that anticipates developing student leaders can be useful for similar ambassador programs.

Purpose of Study

The intent of this study was to use the social change model of leadership development theory to evaluate a student organization as it relates to the key components of developing student leaders for the UK CAFE Ambassadors. More specifically, the aim was to look at how this program has developed the participants as leaders during

their time as an ambassador, and how those skills have affected their lives in the workplace.

Recognized at UK as one of the premier and oldest ambassador programs on campus, the UK CAFE Ambassador Program was evaluated to make sure that it is still fulfilling its intended goals of creating leaders through providing opportunities and practice, to represent the college. In order for an organization to have an impact on its participants and develop student leaders, it must first identify ideal characteristics that demonstrate learning and competence. This particular organization seeks to recruit students that have an interest in agriculture, food and environment, and are willing to become knowledgeable of related majors and career paths. More importantly, individuals in this program must demonstrate leadership ability and have a reputation for good citizenship. Ambassadors strive for characteristics of trust, confidence, leadership, commitment and recruitment. In order for an organization to have a purpose it must have a direction. An evaluation of the program can help steer it in a more productive and supportive direction. By participating in this research, the respondents are aiding in the future growth of this program, allowing for involved students and the college to utilize its resources to better serve the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

To better understand if the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is serving its purpose in developing student leaders to positively represent its institution, an evaluation of the organization's leadership components was conducted. Does the UK CAFE Ambassador Program develop the skills within the participating students to become leaders? What insights/suggestions do the current and past ambassadors have to strengthen the program?

Operational Definitions:

- Student Involvement- also can be referred to as student engagement; out of the classroom active participation in student organizations that enhances the student's personal and academic life.
- Citizenship- a quality that a person is expected to have as a responsible member of a community (Merriam-Webster).
- UK CAFE- University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, formally known as the College of Agriculture or UKAg. Also partnered with the School of Human and Environmental Sciences, HES.
- SeeBlue Preview Nights- the Office of Undergraduate Admission and University Registrar, along with various departments and colleges across campus, send representatives to set up events in 21 different communities throughout the state and region. Faculty and staff from numerous colleges and departments at UK spend several weeks traveling across the Commonwealth and to select cities in neighboring states. This event provides prospective student with invaluable information about the university and admissions. At Preview Nights, students and their families will have the opportunity to talk with faculty, staff and current students about academic programs, campus activities and student life (Haustella, Jones, Bozeman, 2012).
- National FFA Convention- an American youth organization convention, specifically a career and technical student organization, based on middle

and high school classes that promote and support agricultural education (What is FFA).

- UKAg Round Up-This event is based on showcasing the college to prospective students, state legislators, the community and the alumni throughout a four day period. It is the largest event that the college puts on, and the largest alumni based event within the university. In conjunction with Prospective Student Round Up, and Student-Faculty Picnic.
- Winter Event- a prospective student event held in conjunction with a college alumni event that includes tickets to a University of Kentucky Men's Basketball Game. Fall Retreat- a beginning of the school year trip for a weekend to a selected location. A time where all to the new and returning ambassadors get to know each other, learn about different events, team build, etc.

Chapter Two - Literature Review

Student Involvement

There has been a growing interest by professionals in academia for understanding what students can do outside of the classroom to enhance their learning. The main goal for this interest is the institution's desire to develop the whole student (America Council of Education, 1949). Studies based on the development of the theory of involvement have revealed that hours spent in college student organizations per week were positively associated with higher intellectual skills requiring independence and responsibility such as improvement in public speaking skills and holding an elected office (Montelongo, 2002). Scholars like Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) have been vital in a number of studies that have discovered multiple benefits for college students to get involved in activities outside of the classroom. Their focus has been on the students within college experiences and how those affect their leadership skills, self-confidence, perceptions of community service, etc. (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991).

These studies have all concluded that the time and energy students devote to educationally purposeful activities is the single best predictor of learning and personal development (Astin, 1993; Pace, 1980; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991). "Specifically, Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) concluded that students who are members of campus organizations are more likely to be satisfied with their college experiences than those who do not participate in campus organizations" (Jonas, 2009, p.92). Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) supported Astin's (1993) notion that the degree of involvement in activities (i.e., intellectual, vocational, social, and athletic, etc.) was significantly associated with cognitive and affective growth (Montelongo, 2002). The 2006 National

Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which included the reports from over 260,000 students across 523 different institutions, found that those who were engaged outside of the classroom not only received better grades, but they also were more likely to continue college. Simply put, student organizations yield positive outcomes for students who choose to devote their time and effort in becoming involved.

Students benefit from getting involved in organizations in a number of different ways. Socially, involvement in extracurricular activities, especially holding leadership positions, has a direct positive effect on students' social self-concept (Winston et al., 1997). Not only are they making connections with their peers and faculty advisors, they are building various skills needed for real world application. Pascarella and Terenzini (1991) found a strong positive correlation between leadership activities and social self-concept (Moore et al., 1998). By being surrounded with other achievement-oriented peers through organizations, students showed enhanced self-confidence, interpersonal, and leadership skills, all abilities needed in after college positions (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991; Moore et al., 1998). The investment that students make by getting involved led to academic excellence and better preparation those students for the job market after graduation.

Additional benefits of involvement are enhanced job placement and success, both of which are positively influenced by being a member in student organizations (Astin, 1993). When students are ready to graduate and discover their careers it is crucial that they are able to make themselves stand out amongst the other candidates. Recent studies have shown "that being involved in extracurricular activities not only develops the skills necessary to be successful after college, but it indeed increases marketability as much, if

not more, than grade point average in many fields” (Moore et al., 1998, p.8). Williams and Winston (1985) found that these particular students are successful in their jobs because they have an increased awareness of the world, of work, and of their individual skills and limitations as workers. These abilities allowed students to be conscious of their opportunities to become successful and use their resources to achieve success. The benefits that students are receiving go beyond the classroom learning setting and can change a person over time (Montelongo, 2002).

Although not all student organizations are the same in that they do not have the same impact on every student that is involved, they still hold a significant purpose for the development of its members and institutions. Authors, Hu and Kuh (2002) developed a study that looked at the characteristics of the students who were engaged in student organizations and the characteristics of the growing populations of students who identified as disengaged. In addition to the student characteristics, they also acknowledged how the institutions played a role in the student’s decisions of how and why they got involved (Hu & Kuh, 2002). Based on their interests of the relationships between university institutions and the student’s involvement in organizations on campus, they ultimately found that student engagement is a result of the interaction of the student and their institution (Hu & Kuh, 2002). The way in which colleges and universities cooperate and support student organizations can have a major impact on how the students perceive the importance of their organization.

In particular, student ambassador programs hold a substantial amount of responsibility with developing its members, as well as the institutions they represent. Jennifer R. Jonas (2009) conducted a study on student ambassador programs across 40

different private and public universities, which observed how to best use these particular students to help boost enrollment through peer recruitment. Although she mostly looked at the role that the ambassadors play with regard to recruitment for the college, she did find significant gaps in the literature about what the program means or accomplishes from the perspective of the ambassadors. The literature that focuses on ambassador programs is similar to this one in that their main goal is to evaluate these programs for the benefit of recruitment. They do not pursue an understanding of the reasons or benefits students get involved in ambassador programs.

Ambassador programs have been developed throughout various institutions and businesses to help promote a product or place. However, these types of programs have sought to do more than just benefit the institution; they are also helping to develop the participating students. Through various hands-on, impromptu experiences these types of programs offer, the ambassador programs strive to create curriculums to produce leaders within the group and within the college. The leadership skills that are acquired through the ambassador program can be measured through an evaluation.

UK CAFE Ambassador Program

The UK CAFE Ambassador Program, (formally known as the UKAg Ambassador Program) provides many diverse opportunities for the selected students to develop as a student leader. The road to become an ambassador may seem challenging to some people, but those who are motivated to go through the process will receive various chances to grow as an individual and as a collective group. To be considered the student must major in a field of study in the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. CAFE contains a very broad scope of programs, from Animal Sciences to Human

Nutrition to Community and Leadership Development. These students have chosen to pursue an education with an institution that is committed to improving the quality of life for Kentuckians through production agriculture, through food and nutrition, through the environment, and through community and economic development. Potential future ambassadors are involved in research, teaching and extension programs that are part of a national system that links local, state, and global issues (*University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment Ambassador Program Handbook*, Our Land-Grant Value, 2015, para.1). Regardless of the program, students in CAFE seek to collaborate with diverse communities, to expand knowledge of the agriculture, food and environment industries, and to develop access to educational opportunities for all communities.

Also to be considered they must have established scholastic ability on a minimum of 25 semester hours of college level credit, with a cumulative grade point average of a 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. First year students are considered on a provisional basis and are accepted upon satisfactory completion of the minimum requirements. Individuals must demonstrate a polished, public speaking ability, an ability to think on their feet, to motivate, to interact with others on a formal and informal basis, and to present a positive image of the institution. Prospective ambassadors also must show leadership ability and reputation for good citizenship, with a good knowledge of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and the University of Kentucky as a whole.

The selection committee controls the selection process. The selection committee is composed of as many of the following as possible: Director of Student Relations, Representative from Ag Alumni and Development Office, Ambassador Senior Coordinator, Ambassador Junior Coordinator, faculty, staff, and other ambassadors if

needed. The Associate Dean for Academic Programs may designate other representatives if deemed necessary. The selection process begins with current ambassadors, advisors, and faculty in CAFE nominating eligible students to become potential candidates. Letters of email nomination are sent to the potential candidates inviting them to attend an information session and apply for the UK CAFE Ambassadors Program. Candidates are strongly encouraged to attend an ambassador orientation session and to receive the application. The Director of Student Relations screens applications, and those candidates meeting requirements are invited to an interview. During the interview, each candidate makes a 3-5 minute presentation on a topic chosen by the selection committee, typically related to something that will allow them to showcase their abilities. Also during the interview, the candidate answers a series of questions that will test their knowledge about CAFE, leadership opportunities they have acquired in the past, their academic successes, etc. The new ambassadors are selected without regard of economic or social status, race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, veteran status, or physical or mental disability. Some consideration has been given to provide geographic and academic major balance. The selection committee selects only qualified nominees to fill vacancies left by graduating/retiring seniors or other ambassadors who resign. This process occurs during the spring semester of each academic year.

The configuration of the program consists of multiple direct stakeholders that are associated with the overall implementation of the program. The first stakeholder is the Associate Dean for Instruction, who controls all activities and has the power to alter the structure of the program, based on the structure of his/her office. The Director of Student

Relations, is the head coordinator of the UK CAFE Ambassador Program under the supervision of Associate Dean for Instruction. He/she develops and coordinates activities deemed appropriate for the ambassadors. The Director of Student Relations maintains a calendar of events in her/his office, takes requests for ambassadors, and evaluates the performance of each ambassador. This person has the duty of establishing, maintaining, updating and distributing a guidebook containing specific information about UK, the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment and the profession of agriculture, to each ambassador. She/he is also responsible for training members, orienting new members, and conducting educational activities for the ambassadors.

Within the ambassador group, there are select members that have the responsibility and privilege to obtain a senior or junior coordinator position. The senior coordinator is an ambassador with at least one year of experience as an ambassador who is nominated and voted on by the advisors with the assistance of the other ambassadors. He/she works closely with the Director of Student Relations in coordinating activities. A junior coordinator is only selected if the Director of Student Relations or senior coordinator feels the need for extra help during the school year. They are selected by vote from the group as well. Duties of the coordinators are as follows: fulfill all the duties of an UK CAFE Ambassador; check the calendar of events and send email messages at least once a week to make sure ambassadors are signed up for the activities or to remind them of meetings or other events; preside at ambassador meetings; take attendance at meetings and monitor the participation level of each ambassador; keep morale high; motivate the group when needed; always be enthusiastic; set a good example.

The most important direct stakeholders are the 25 ambassadors that are selected by the selection committee, based on a number deemed appropriate by the Associate Dean. After serving one academic year, if the ambassador chooses to return, they will not need to reapply. All ambassadors should be leaders and bring a cooperative and enthusiastic attitude to all functions as well as the willingness to work. They are expected to continually work to enhance the image of and interest in agriculture and the University of Kentucky. The duties of each ambassador are as follows:

1. Ambassadors must remain in good academic standing (2.5 cumulative GPA) in order to retain their position;
2. Ambassadors shall be responsible to the Director of Student Relations;
3. Ambassadors shall attend all regularly scheduled meetings or notify a coordinator or advisor if they are unable to attend;
4. Address groups of high school or community college students in Kentucky about the importance of attending college, college life, and the University of Kentucky College of Agriculture, Food and Environment;
5. Assist with Roundup Week, Student-Faculty Picnic, National FFA Convention, Preview Nights, and on-campus recruitment events, etc. as requested by the Director of Student Relations;
6. Be available to address alumni groups as requested;
7. Be available to talk to civic clubs as requested;
8. Ambassadors must be able to give an informative, interesting, and accurate College of Agriculture, Food and Environment tour as well as a tour of the whole campus;

9. Ambassadors must be able to talk with prospective students and parents both on and off campus about the College and the University;
10. Ambassadors must attend the training seminar(s) offered by the program;
11. Ambassadors shall wear proper attire at all organized functions. A neat, clean appearance and proper conduct must be maintained while in uniform. Failure to perform the duties as an ambassador will result in termination as decided by the coordinators and advisors (UK CAFE Ambassador Handbook, 2015, pp.4-5).

If the student is truly committed to the program they will have the benefit of learning the crucial skill of time management. Being an ambassador can take a great deal of time and effort on the student's part. However, there is an option for those who have served the program well but feel they do not have the time to commit to the program that may consider the emeritus option. This person will devote their time and skills to the program when they feel it is necessary. Often an emeritus only participates in one or two events throughout the year, and are not required to fulfill any duties.

One of the developing outlets that the program uses to reach out to other stakeholders like prospective students, alumni, etc. is social media. Starting in 2010 it provided a dynamic way for the ambassadors to build their communication and collaboration skills. The College of Agriculture, Food and Environment uses this as an opportunity to leverage social media tools to refresh intellectual content, engage new students and clientele, extend the reach and impact of programs and position the college for future growth and success. Social media has changed the way the college communicates as an institution. For that reason the ambassadors are given guidelines as

to how to present information to the public through various sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, in an effective and safe manner, within university policies (UK CAFE Ambassador Handbook, 2015, pp.46-49).

The purpose of this program is not only to serve the college as a recruitment and retention tool, but to enhance the skills of those students who participate. From review of Ambassador Manual and materials, curriculum, and current literature, key skills that this program seeks to develop include:

- Leadership
- Public speaking
- Recruitment
- Knowledge
- Professionalism
- Appreciation of diversity
- Teamwork
- Confidence
- Citizenship
- Accountability
- Time Management

An ambassador that truly puts forth the effort within the program will presumably develop these skills, if not more. The definition of being a leader can mean different things to different people and institutions, but being a leader in the form of an ambassador has the potential to instill priceless life skills within the individuals who are

involved. This is not an exhaustive list of skills that all leaders have, but it is a list that the UK CAFE Ambassador Program seeks to develop within its college students.

The Social Change Model of Leadership Development

A traditional look at leadership is mostly focused on a particular person who holds a certain hierarchical position. To outline how the scholars at the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) develop the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (SCM), leadership was first defined as a concern effecting change on behalf of others and society; as collaborative; as a process rather than a position; as values-based; as all students have the potential to be leaders; and as a service for developing students leadership skills (HERI, 1996). This new approach to leadership led to the development of the SCM and its relevant application to assess college student's individual, group and society/community values that can be interpreted as skill development. One of the first studies that contributed to the progress of this theory was a longitudinal study conducted by A. Astin (1993). A study of more than 200 four-year colleges and universities in a national sample was used, which involved some 25,000 students who entered these institutions as freshmen in the fall of 1985 and were followed up four years later in 1989 (Astin, 1993). He focused primarily on student outcomes and how they were affected by college environments. This study ultimately led to over eighty outcome measures, 150 student input measures and nearly 200 different environmental measures (Astin, 1993). One of the many suggestions that came from this study was that peer groups have the potential to be a powerful source of influence on the undergraduate college student's leadership development skills (HERI, 1996). The interaction that students have with each

other when working on group projects or mentoring, allow them to learn how to work together to reach a common goal.

Another study that helped shape the SCM was developed by Helen Astin and Carol Leland. These authors helped to form the understanding that effective leadership emphasizes collective action, shared power, and a passionate commitment on the part of the leader to social justice (HERI, 1996). The contributions of this study highlighted some of the eight characteristics that make up the frame-work of SCM. Studies such as these confirmed the ideas of HERI in shaping the development of the model to measure leadership skills.

The purpose of the SCM design is “to enhance the development of leadership qualities in all participants—those who hold formal leadership positions as well as those who do not—and to promote a process that is inclusive and actively engages all who wish to contribute” (HERI, 1996, p. 23). For professionals in the field of developing students into leaders, this model exemplifies some of the crucial elements it takes to build successful leadership skills. The model has two primary goals: (1) to enhance student learning and development; more specifically, to develop in each student participant greater self-knowledge and leadership competence; (2) to facilitate positive social change at the institution or in the community (HERI, 1996). Self- knowledge is defined as “understanding of one’s talents, values, and interests, especially as these relate to the student’s capacity to provide effective leadership” (HERI, 1996, p.24). Leadership competence is defined as “the capacity to mobilize oneself and others to serve and to work collaboratively” (HERI, 1996, p.24). These two elements form a foundation for the overall goal the SCM, which is facilitating positive change. Being self-aware allows

students to not only recognize how they can work most efficiently and effectively towards change, but also how they can work with others. The knowledge of basic leadership skills will drive students within an organization to best utilize its resources to implement the change or influence they seek to make.

Measuring socially responsible leadership capacity, the model looks at leadership development through different perspectives: the individual, the group, and the community/society. The individual level allows the scholars who developed this model to answer questions like: what personal qualities are we attempting to foster and develop in those who participate in a leadership development program? What personal qualities are most supportive of group functioning and positive social change? (HERI, 1996). The group perspective considers questions similar to: how can the collaborative leadership development process be designed not only to facilitate the development of the desired individual qualities but also to effect positive social change? (HERI, 1996). The community/society perspective asks questions like: toward what social ends is the leadership development activity directed? What kinds of service activities are most effective in energizing the group and in developing desired personal qualities in the individual?" (HERI, 1996). All three of these levels interact with each other involving continuous feedback loops, which indicate that these perspectives do not act alone, and that each component works upon the other components in order to accomplish the intended change.

The scholars at HERI identified leadership development values that are categorized within each of these perspectives. Individual values are defined as consciousness of self, congruence, and commitment (HERI, 1996). Group process values

are defined as collaboration, common purpose, and controversy with civility (HERI, 1996). The community/societal value is defined as citizenship (HERI, 1996). The overarching goal of the SCM is positive change within a community for a collective group. Within this model, all of the values influence each other in a multidirectional fashion, meaning that not one value stands alone in creating social change. Figure 2.1 illustrates the leadership development model which includes all of the values in their respective categories.

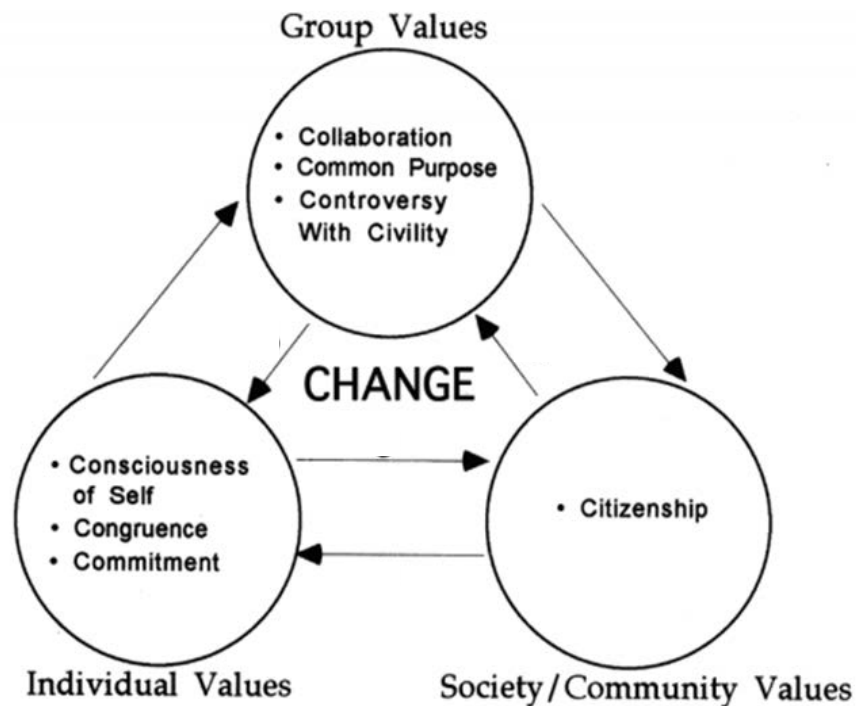


Figure 2.1 The Social Change Model of Leadership Development. (Kern, 2016)

Often referred to as the 7 C's of leadership, these values are as stated above: collaboration, common purpose, controversy with civility, consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, and citizenship. "Change" is viewed as the central thread within this model since the ultimate goal is positive social change (Dugan & Komives, 2007).

The SCM model provided a theoretical backbone for a multi-institutional study that “was interested in aspects of students’ experiences in college that contributed to leadership outcomes” (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Funded by the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership foundation, this study used input variables such as demographic and pre-college knowledge, as well as environmental variables like experiences during college, to comprise conclusions about developing leadership capacity in college students (Dugan & Komives, 2007). By using the Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), developed by Tyree (1998), the MSL reached across to 55 campuses covering over 63,000 participants (Dugan & Komives, 2007). The SRLS was a 103-item instrument, reduced to a 68-item instrument that used self-reported statements to identify students’ leadership efficacy (Dugan & Komives, 2007). While designed to measure the values of the SCM, this instrument also included demographic variables, pre-college variables, and variables that measured ways students were engaged on campus.

Findings on this study have led to a better understanding of leadership capacity, as well as cognitive development and an appreciation of diversity. A brief overview of the findings from this MSL were that: pre-college experience matters, leadership shows moderate gender differences, racial and ethnic groups differ, openness to *change* is greater for marginalized groups of students, discussions about socio-cultural issues matter a great deal, mentoring matters, campus involvement matters, service matters, positional leadership roles develop leadership, and formal leadership programs matter (Dugan & Komives, 2007). The pre-college factors, including involvement in high school student groups, positional leadership roles, varsity sports, etc., accounted for the most increase in change in the students self-perceived leadership efficacy; including values of

commitment, and common purpose (Dugan & Komives, 2007). Additionally, this study looked to use significant mean differences across scales based on race. Substantial differences occurred on the scales of consciousness of self, congruence, commitment, controversy with civility, citizenship, and change. With a “follow-up analyses revealed that African American students often anchored the top scores across the SCM values and Asian American students often anchored the lowest scores” (Dugan & Komives, 2007). This study provides much ground to utilize the SCM model to evaluate the leadership capacity of any group, while keeping in mind that a student’s demographic information and pre-college experience does have an impact on the development of certain values.

The eight values of SCM are all elements that help develop leadership skills in any person. On the individual level the values of consciousness of self, congruence, and commitment tie into the skills of professionalism, accountability, confidence, knowledge, public speaking, and time management. Consciousness of self refers to being aware of the beliefs, values, attitudes, and emotions (HERI, 1996). This value leads to one being confident about their abilities whether that includes public speaking or knowledge about their institution. Public speaking is a skill that an ambassador develops by practicing and being confident to interact with large groups of people. Knowledge about UK and CAFE is also another individual skill that an ambassador acquires with their willingness to learn and being confident enough to educate others. Congruence is referred as thinking, feeling, and behaving with consistency, genuineness, authenticity, and honesty toward others (HERI, 1996). This value relates to the skill of professionalism, which is how an ambassador is expected to act not only within the program, but also in their chosen career setting. Commitment is the energy that motivates the individual to serve and that drives

the collective effort; it is directed toward both the group activity as well as its intended outcomes (HERI, 1996). With commitment values ambassadors are able to learn the invaluable skills of time management and accountability. Being committed to a group or task requires the ability to analyze time spent working, and the prioritization of certain task in order to maximize efficiency. Commitment also requires the student to be held accountable for the events or assignments they agree to complete. Also, the skill of having or developing a work ethic is a product of someone who is committed to their various responsibilities.

The group values within the SCM are collaboration, common purpose and controversy with civility which tie into the skills of teamwork, leadership, and dedication. Collaboration is to work with others in a common effort; it constitutes the cornerstone value of the group leadership effort because it empowers self and others through trust (HERI, 1996). Collaboration increases group effectiveness by making the most of the multiple talents and perspectives each group member has, and that diversity generates creative solutions and actions (HERI, 1996). The value of collaboration allows students to be successful when teamwork is essential for completing a task. It also permits an opportunity where a leader is needed in the group, resulting in the ambassador having a chance to take the initiative for the group. Similar to collaboration, common purpose is a value that is referred to working together with shared ideas and goals. Recognizing the common purpose and mission of the group helps to generate the high level of trust that any successful collaboration requires (HERI, 1996). This value also relates to the skills of teamwork and leadership. Controversy with civility recognizes two realities of any group effort: differences in viewpoints are inevitable, and such differences must be aired

openly but with civility (HERI, 1996). This value requires a sense of respect when approaching the different views of others in the group, which is pertinent to being an effective leader and working in a team. Controversy can also lead to new, creative solutions to problems, especially when it occurs in an atmosphere of civility, collaboration, and common purpose (HERI, 1996).

In the society/community level of the SCM, citizenship is the process whereby the individual and the collaborative group work for positive change on behalf of others and the community (HERI, 1996). For the purpose of this study citizenship is interchangeably used as a value and as a skill. The skill of citizenship is referred to the development of a quality that a person is expected to have as a responsible member of a community. As a part of being ambassadors the students are exposed to a variety of different people within the UK and CAFE community, and within the agriculture, food and environment communities, they must learn to appreciate the importance of the diversity in people and ideas they come across. One of the tasks that the ambassadors are responsible for is recruitment for CAFE and the agriculture, food and environment communities, with this they are developing a skill that convinces new individuals to join a particular community.

Using the basic premise of the SCM model to evaluate the ambassador program will allow conclusions to be made about the program, and offer some guidance as to where the program might need to make some positive changes. In order to associate the concepts of the SCM and the intentions of this study a new figure must be created. In this model, all of the skills work in a multidirectional fashion to promote growth within the UK CAFE Ambassadors. By relating the skills developed within the ambassador

program to the values of the SCM, figure 2.2 illustrates the model that will be used for the purpose of this study.

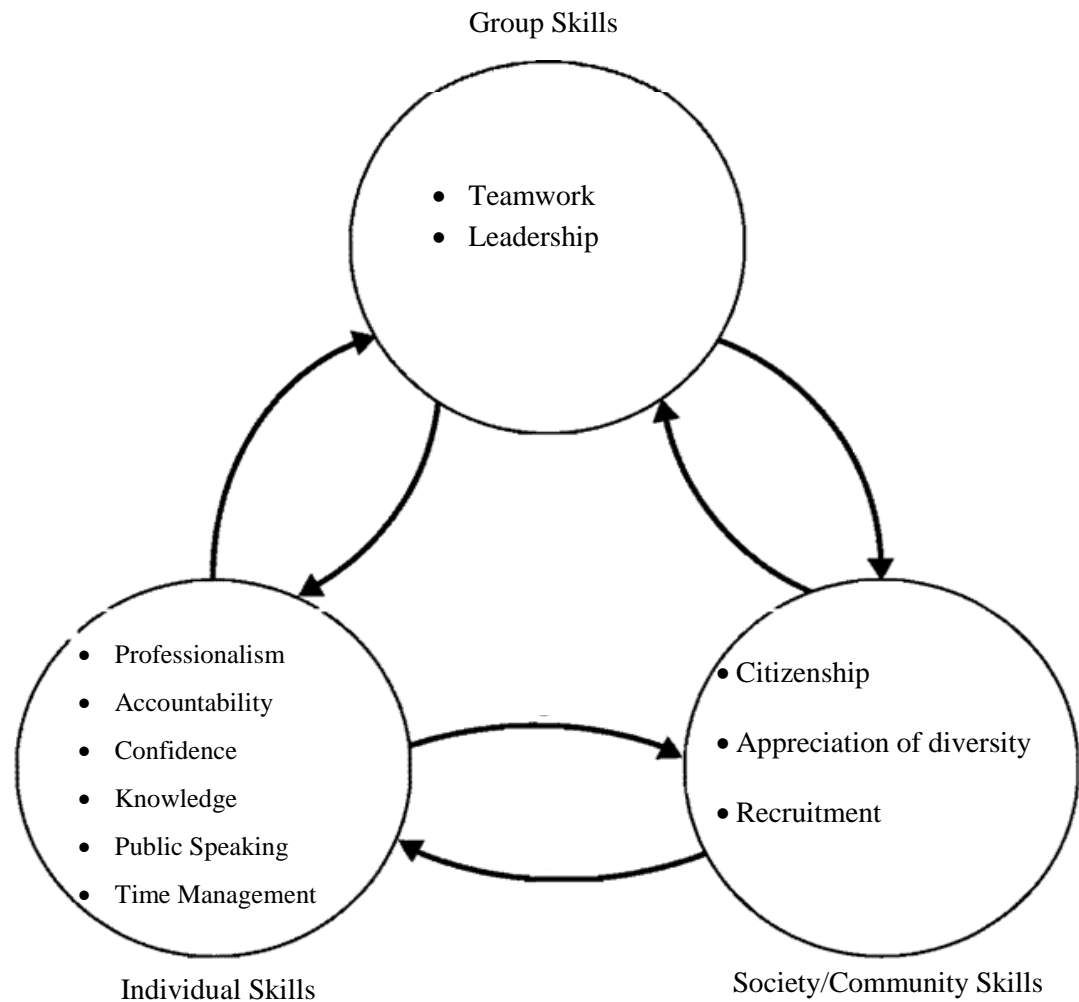


Figure 2.2: Skills within the Social Change Model of Leadership

Chapter Three - Methodology

Research Questions

To better understand if the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is serving its purpose in developing student leaders to positively represent its institution, an evaluation of the organization's leadership components was conducted. The intent of this study was to use the premise of the social change model of leadership development theory to evaluate a student organization as it relates to the key components of developing student leaders for the UK CAFE Ambassadors at the University of Kentucky. More specifically, to look at how this program has developed the participants as leaders during their time as an ambassador, and how those skills have affected their lives in the professional setting. Does the UK CAFE Ambassador Program develop the skills within the participating students to become leaders? What insights/suggestions do the current and past ambassadors have to strengthen the program?

Methods

For the purpose of this study, a concurrent embedded strategy of mixed methods was used to determine the relationship of being an ambassador to the development of leadership skills. This allowed for comparison of the quantitative and qualitative data side by side as two different pictures to provide an overall composite assessment of the problem (Creswell, p. 214). A survey (see appendix A for complete instrument) was created to assess various skills inserted in the group, individual, and society/community values of the SCM: teamwork, leadership, professionalism, accountability, confidence, knowledge, public speaking, appreciation of diversity, citizenship, and recruitment. Additionally, this survey helped to identify areas where the program may need to

strengthen or change, by posing open ended questions and asking the participants to rank the importance of events and tasks.

The purpose of using a survey to research this student group was to make inferences about this particular population (Babbie, 1990). This chosen method of data collection was advantageous because it was easily accessible through a simple Qualtrics form on the internet. This facilitated access to a greater geographical range of participants while maintaining anonymity of responses about experiences of being an ambassador. The survey was cross-sectional, in that the data was only collected at one period of time.

Sample

The participants of this survey included a subset of past and current UK CAFE ambassadors. The sample design is single-staged, as access to the contact information was obtained through records kept by the ambassador coordinator. Past ambassadors were identified as ambassadors that served from the fall school semester of 2010 through the spring school semester of 2015; approximately 55 people. Current ambassadors included ambassadors that served from the fall school semester of 2015 through the spring school semester of 2016; approximately 22 people. The ambassadors represent a wide range of individualities that include unique backgrounds, interests, demographics, and chosen/preferred career paths. The reasoning for this selective group of participants was because most of the questions asked in the survey inquire about freshman year of college. Being removed more than six years from the participant's freshman year would not have permitted accurate results, as memory bias may have occurred. Another reason for using a cohort that was only five years from graduation was to identify if this program

had an initial impact on a participants career choice. Lastly, with recent personnel changes within the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, this particular cohort would have the best insight as to how to improve the program for the future. All of the potential participants were accepted under the same leadership structure, but served under different leadership structure.

Instrumentation

There was one survey for current and past ambassadors to detect if the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is fulfilling its purpose in developing student leaders. The major components of this survey included a section of statements wherein the participants were asked to indicate whether their opinion was strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, or not applicable using a Likert scale. The next portion of the survey was comprised of open ended questions that inquired how this program personally helped them, suggestions for the future, etc. The last portion of this survey asked the participants to indicate which events and tasks they were responsible for that they felt had the least influence on their skill development, by checking any of the answers provided. They are also asked to indicate which skills they developed that they can attribute to being a part of the program, by checking any of the answers provided. This survey was approved by the University of Kentucky Office of Research Integrity, Institutional Review Board.

The Likert scale portion uses some original statements and statements from the developed Socially Responsible Leadership Scale Revised Version II (SRLS-2). The SRLS-2 survey has been revised from the original 103-item survey used to assess college students' leadership participation. "The SRLS was designed as a tool for measuring the

values associated with the Social Change Model for leadership development and for assessing college students' participation in a process of socially responsible leadership" (The Socially Responsible Leadership Scale (SRLS), para.3). The participants are asked to think back to their time as a freshman in college and again as a graduate/current member of the ambassador program to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement for each statement. A pilot test was distributed to five non-ambassador students, faculty and staff to complete for a better understanding of the time it will take to complete the entire survey.

The survey was distributed to the selected population via email. The email contained the framework of the study: brief introduction to the purpose of the survey, a statement as to why this particular population was chosen, in addition to a link to the survey with an expected time frame it will take to complete. Participants were invited to take the survey in March 2016, and were given a three week time span to complete. A reminder email was sent out three times to all the participants throughout the three weeks.

Measures

For the first part of the survey the participants self-reported using a 5-point Likert scale with each statement, determining if the participant "strongly agrees (5); agrees (4); neutral (3); disagrees (2); strongly disagrees (1)" to the statement. They were also given the option to indicate "not applicable (0)" to any of the questions.

All of the statements reflected a skill that the participating student was anticipated to acquire or strengthen during their time as an ambassador. To categorize the skills within the individual values, this section included questions that relate to professionalism, accountability, confidence, knowledge, and public speaking. Professionalism was

defined as “the skill, good judgement, and polite behavior that is expected from a person who is trained to do a job well” (Merriam-Webster). Examples of these statements included, “being seen as a person of integrity was important to me.” Accountability was defined as “an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one’s actions” (Merriam-Webster). An example was, “when I agreed to participate in an event or be responsible for an activity, I followed through and completed assignments on time.” Confidence was recognized as having a skill that exhibits assurance or self-reliance. Examples of this included, “I regularly introduced myself to new people in social situations,” or “I could describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.” Knowledge was identified as the awareness and skill the participants had/developed about the university, college, or program. Some examples of these statements included, “I knew and was comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns,” “I was familiar with events and activities on the UK campus,” and “I was well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.” Public speaking was defined as a skill that includes speaking to a usually large group of people (Merriam-Webster). Examples of this statement included, “I was comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I didn’t know,” and “I was able to effectively articulate valuable information.” Lastly, time management was defined as the ability to analyze time spent working and the prioritization of certain tasks in order maximize efficiency. An example of this statement was, “it was important to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner.”

The skills that are categorized within the group values section included statements that relate to teamwork and leadership. Teamwork was identified as working with others towards a common effort. Some example statements included, “I was seen as someone who worked well with others,” and “I enjoy working with others toward a common goal.” Leadership was recognized as the capacity in which someone has to lead themselves or a group. Some example statements were, “I was usually the first to volunteer when a leader was called for,” “I shared my ideas with others,” or “I was comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.”

The skills that relate to the society/community values contain statements that related to citizenship, appreciation of diversity, and recruitment. Citizenship was defined as a quality that a person is expected to have as a responsible member of a community (Merriam-Webster) Examples of citizenship were, “it is important to me that I play an active role in my communities,” “I felt part of a community,” or “I believed I had responsibilities to my community.” Appreciation of diversity was defined as the ability to understand the importance of different beliefs and people. Examples included, “I respected opinions other than my own,” “I worked well in changing environments” or “I struggled when group members had ideas that were different from mine.” Lastly, recruitment was recognized as an ability to add new individuals to a population. An example of this statement included, “I regularly gave time to making a difference for someone else.”

The next part of the survey included open ended questions that inquired about ways to improve the program, and how this program has directly impacted their careers or lives after graduation. These questions were, “if you were the coordinator for the

ambassador program, what would you have done differently?” or “did/do you feel the ambassador program help you develop skills for your future? If yes, in what way(s)?” Open ended questions are the best way to capture the participant’s true opinions and feelings about the program.

The last portion of the survey asked the participants to rank the importance of certain events and tasks they had to accomplish as an ambassador. In this section the participants had the freedom to indicate which skills they believe to have acquired because of the ambassador program and through which particular events. Also included in this section were miscellaneous questions that helped to identify if this program was something they enjoyed. Examples of these questions are, “being an ambassador was a good experience, but given the chance I would not be one again,” or “I would advise a student to become an ambassador.”

Findings

Basic demographic data is presented in a table (Table 3.1) that shows the number of participants that completed the survey and the years in which they served as an ambassador. This is a useful tool to better understand the audience in which the data is pulled from. There were a total of 49 completed responses out of the 77 invitations that were sent to the participants. At a 64% response rate, there was confidence in making conclusions about this particular group of current and past ambassadors and future of the program. The responses could not be separated into the groups of current or past ambassador, since the survey was anonymous.

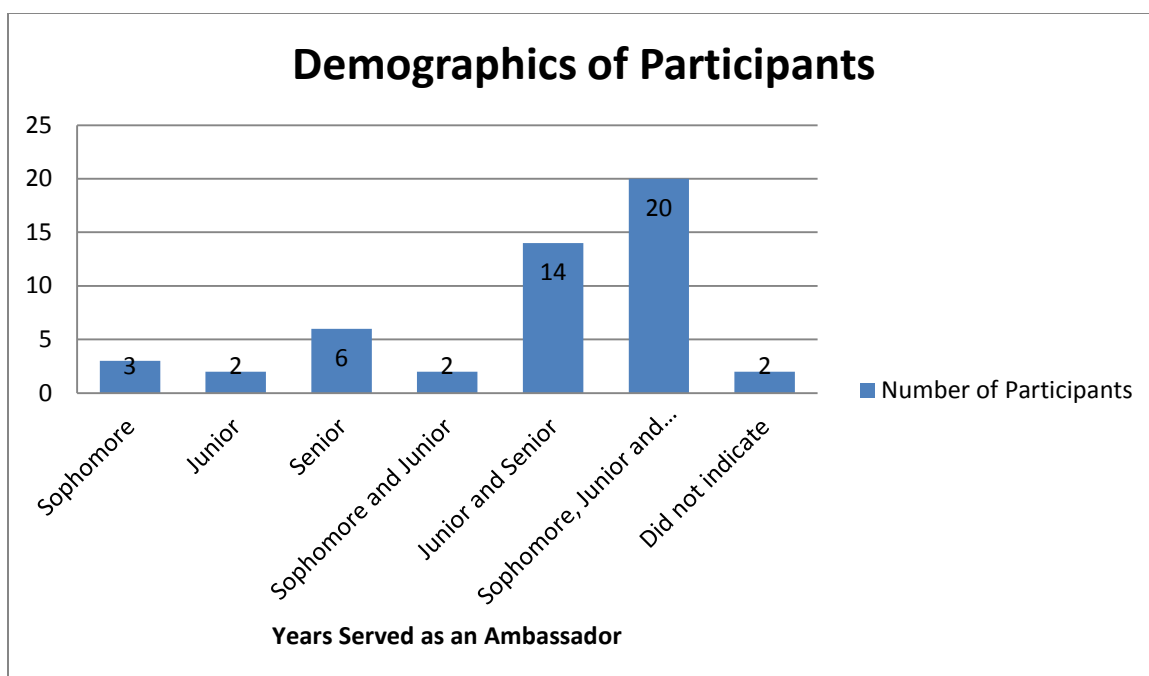


Table 3.1-Demographics of Survey Participants

Descriptive analysis was used throughout analyzing of this retrospective study. First, the collective mean scores of each statement were organized in a table to compare the student's perception of their skills before the ambassador program and after the ambassador program, see table 3.2. This was done to observe the differences of mean scores in each statement which signifies the variations of change within the group. Note that "Strongly Agree" was coded as 1 through "Strongly Disagree" as 5. Thus, most mean response scores fell in the "Strongly Agree" to "Agree" category. As seen in Table 3.2 some mean scores varied between the before and after columns. This difference could imply the students either believed the ambassador program attributed to the development of that particular skill, or they already had a good foundation for that skill before coming into the program. For example, the statement, "I was well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries" had the most variation between the before

and after mean scores, suggesting the group attributed the ambassador program to the development of their knowledge about the different industries. One statement that had minimal variation amongst the mean scores within the group was, “Being seen as a person of integrity was important to me.” This showed that the participants indicated that they mostly “strongly agree” with this statement, both before and after the program.

Skill Assessment Statements	Before		After	
	\bar{X}	N	\bar{X}	N
I was seen as someone who worked well with others.	1.67	52	1.41	49
I enjoyed working with others toward common goals.	1.56	52	1.37	49
I knew and was comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns.	1.94	52	1.12	49
I knew and was comfortable with at least one fellow student in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns.	1.73	52	1.23	48
I was comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I didn't know.	2.15	52	1.29	48
I knew the purpose and scope of the UK CAFE Ambassador program.	2.88	52	1.20	49
I struggled when group members had ideas that were different from mine.	3.63	51	3.92	49
I was familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.	2.52	52	1.41	49
I was well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.	2.67	52	1.49	49
I was usually the first to volunteer when others called upon someone to lead.	2.67	52	1.98	49
It was important to me to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner.	1.98	52	1.51	47
I respected opinions other than my own.	1.92	52	1.45	49
I shared my ideas with others.	1.90	52	1.67	49
Being seen as a person of integrity was important to me.	1.48	52	1.22	49
When I agreed to participate in an event, I followed through, was on time, and attentive.	1.60	52	1.29	49
I regularly introduced myself to new people in social situations.	2.35	52	1.63	49
I was able to effectively articulate valuable information.	2.02	52	1.40	48
I could describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.	2.46	52	1.53	47
It was important to me that I played an active role in my communities.	1.98	52	1.39	49
I believed I had responsibilities to my community.	1.88	52	1.45	49
I regularly gave time to making a difference for someone else.	2.21	52	1.67	48
I was comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.	2.33	52	1.57	49
I worked well in changing environments.	2.50	52	1.78	49

Table 3.2—Skill Assessment Items Mean Scores

After noticing not much variation between the before and after mean scores, a compilation of each individual person's responses was completed (see Appendix B for examples). Their individual responses to the before and after statements were compared with a simple observation of how many points, either positive or negative, the person indicated change. For example, appendices B1 shows the change a particular participant indicated. By noting these changes of each participant from the statements, the findings noticeably show that many participants improved certain skills throughout their time in college with their participation in the ambassador program. Examples did arise of some students recording that their skills actually regressed (see Appendix B2). However, when asked in the open ended questions what skills they had improved, their responses included some of the skills they previously mentioned (in the Likert scale statements) that had regressed.

By capturing each participant's responses to this portion of the survey, it seemed as if there were many conflicting results with the open ended questions. With little variation in change between the before and after responses, it would be assumed that the ambassador program did not help build skills, but the open ended responses were in consistent. The inferences made based on these statements are merely intuitive, and are not to be confused with generalized conclusions about the future cohorts of ambassadors.

Lastly, content analysis was conducted to analyze the responses to the open ended questions, revealing several themes. The first category of the results are focused toward the impact that this program has made on its participants, both quantitative and qualitative. The second category of the results is geared towards the improvement of the program, both qualitative and quantitative as well.

Results

The number of respondents for each question drastically varied, anywhere from 19-49. What was pleasing to see was those who put time and effort into filling out this survey, gave thoughtful answers that will help the future of this program. Of course there were some participants that seemed to not have put much thought into the answers they provided, but even they, when asked about their fondest memory, gave meaningful positive responses.

To assist with greater organization of the qualitative results portion, there were two main categories identified to answer the research questions, impact and improvement. These categories also included subcategories that detected different themes that were frequent amongst the responses. Under the category of impact some common themes included: connections in the industry/networking/introduction to career; meeting/more interaction with people in the college (faculty/staff/ students); helped to receive scholarships/internships; enhanced resume; confidence to speak with unfamiliar groups; influencing prospective students; grew closer to fellow ambassadors/had a family feel/formed a connection which created a home/support system; helped in future professional roles; became a well-rounded student; created a responsibility to give back/contributing to the community/proud to apart and represent the college community; created more knowledge and appreciation for the college; offered opportunities to travel; pushed outside comfort zone; and then lastly, no direct impact. The range in themes from the participant's responses (see Table 3.3) shows how the ambassador program has affected people in a variety of different ways. See the complete set of responses relating to impact in Tables 3.4 and 3.5.

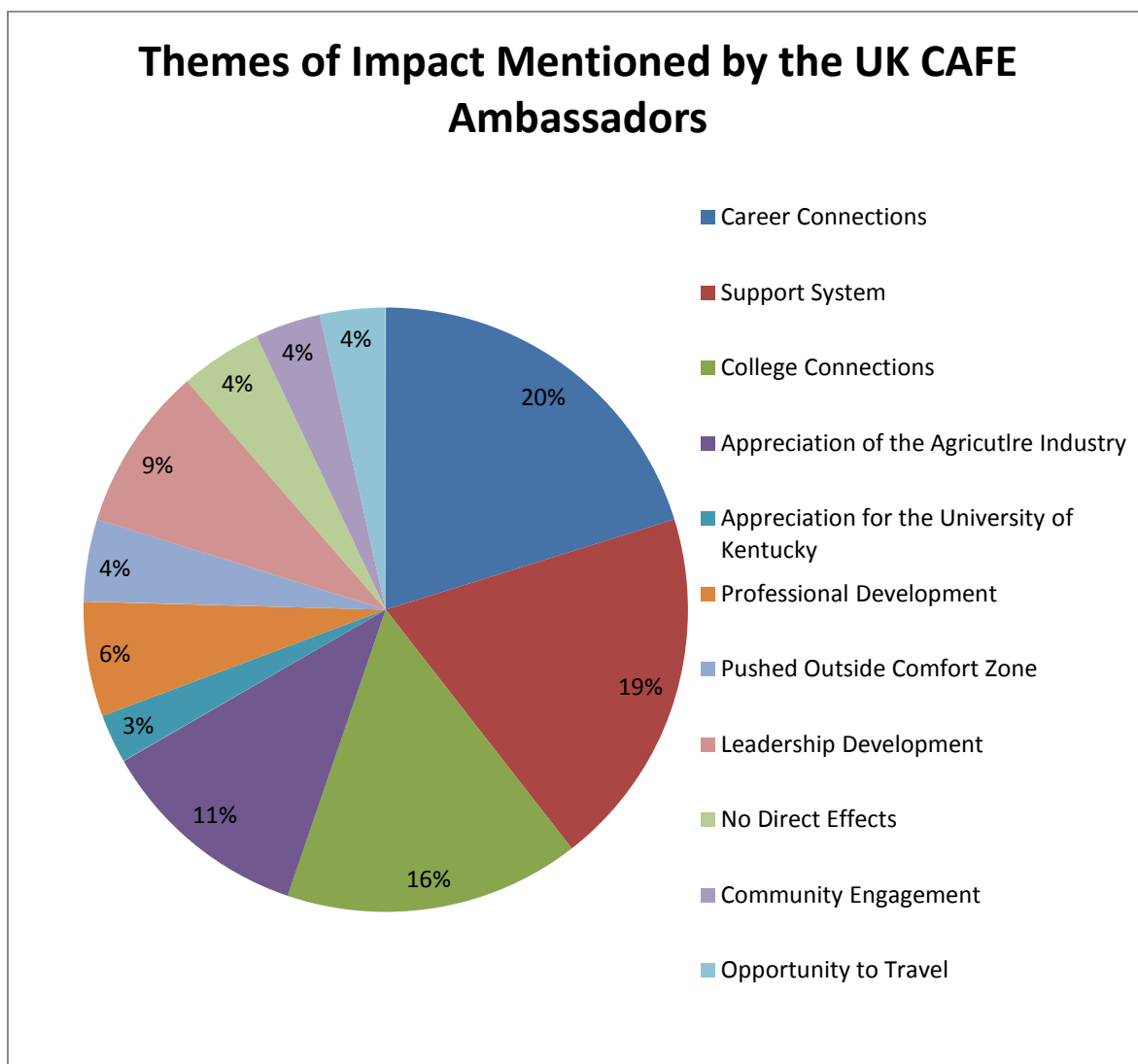


Table 3.3- Themes of Impact Mentioned by the UK CAFE Ambassadors

Impact from the Program

Career connections. The ambassador program has been successful in helping students undertake opportunities they might not have had otherwise. One of the largest themes captured from the survey was about how the ambassador program has impacted the participant's life by helping them make connections within the industry/network/introducing them to their career. Examples of these responses included:

- “Yes, in more ways than I could ever have imagined. I learned how to respect people with opinions different than my own. I improved my public speaking skills, my networking abilities, and learned how to work well with older adults in positions of power, such as professors and administration. I also took the skills I learned from being an ambassador to my future job where I created a drug prevention version of the Ag Ambassador program for middle and high school students.”

-“I think the Ambassador program helps opens doors to careers and opportunities. Since you are the face of the college as an Ambassador, you have the opportunity to travel and meet prospective students, other ambassadors from out of state, and UK alumni. These networking opportunities open doors for personal relationships as well as future business relationships.”

-“Yes, as an ambassador I had the opportunity to meet and network with people that I would not have met otherwise. As a recent graduate, being an ambassador not only looks good on my resume, but it has given me many experiences to talk about with prospective employers (organizing events, speaking in front of groups, promoting the college, leadership, etc.).”

Support system. The other major theme that was captured from the survey was how the ambassador program provided students with a support system/a place they called home/stronger connections with fellow ambassadors and the college. The ambassadors were able to build positive relationships amongst each other, creating a place of familiarity within a vast university:

-“Some of my best memories are with the CAFE Ambassador program. I have developed lifelong relationships with fellow ambassadors and with CAFE faculty. Ambassadors has been a way for me to give back to the college.”

- “Hands down, the close friendships I made with many of the other ambassadors was the best part of being an ambassador. Being an ambassador helped to further my understanding of, commitment to, and fondness for the college. It helped me meet many students, a great many potential students, and staff of the college that I would not have interacted with otherwise.”

-“I walked away from college with a feeling of support--like from a FAMILY. There is no better support group on earth during, as well as after, college, than the college of ag family, specifically the ambassador group.”

- “It made my experience exceptional. My experience as an ambassador made UK my home away from home. Now when I come to Lexington, it's like I'm home again. The people I met and impacted through my experience are unforgettable.”

College connections. The next theme that seemed to be highly prevalent when asked about how the program has impacted the students were the new acquaintances that grew between the students and the college’s faculty, staff, and alumni. It was mentioned fairly often, about 45% of the responses, that without this ambassador program the students would not have had the opportunity to connect with various constituents within the college. These connections offered the students a broader network base which in some cases advanced their opportunities after college:

-“Yes, the Ambassador Program allowed me to expand my network, particularly with the faculty and administration in the College of Agriculture. My involvement

in the program led to speaking engagements and career opportunities down the line.”

-“Yes. The Ambassador Program helped me make connections with professors, other faculty, and other students. These connections later helped me jump into future opportunities that I otherwise would not have known about or would not even have known to ask about. This is beyond the opportunities that I have had thanks to the skills I acquired and/or developed during my time as an ambassador.

-“Yes, by forcing me out of my comfort zone, the Ambassador program has allowed me to succeed in the corporate agricultural business by well-representing myself well in front of leaders within the industry. Through preview nights, alumni events, prospective student tours, etc., the Ambassador program exposed me to many different social situations with faculty members, alumni, students, concerned/skeptical parents, etc.”

Appreciation of agriculture industry. It is also important as ambassadors of a particular college that supports specific industries, that the students learn more about not only the logistics of the college, but the industry they are representing as well. A portion general population of students within CAFE have had chances to be involved and immersed into the agriculture industry growing up, but an overwhelmingly number of students within the college have had no prior knowledge to or experience within the agriculture industry before coming to college. This also is the case for some of the chosen ambassadors. Along with this theme, responses included how being in this program helped them discover an appreciation and develop a strong passion for the agriculture industry. Examples of these responses included:

-“Yes. The ambassador program opened up many doors. It has allowed me to spread the word of agriculture, which I have discovered is one of my passions. It also has given me the opportunity to have the possibility of becoming a Peer Mentor.”

-Absolutely. It helped expose me to other facets of the agricultural sector. I consider myself an ambassador for the ag industry today, building upon what I was able to learn as a College of Ag Ambassador.”

-“It allowed me to better understand agriculture and its importance. I'm a city girl and was studying landscape architecture so I was very much removed from agriculture.”

Appreciation for the University of Kentucky. Similar to building an appreciation for the agriculture industry, many ambassadors reacted with developing a better appreciation for the University of Kentucky as a whole. Again, by being selected as an ambassador they were responsible for representing many different sectors of their time as a college student. While in the program, and often times even after graduating, these ambassadors were the faces of the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, the University of Kentucky, and the entire agriculture industry. The ambassadors responded with statements that expressed their appreciation for the university:

-“Serving as an ambassador made me really understand UK as a whole. I was kept up on current events throughout the university and also was a part of many large events representing the university. My love for UK has grown tremendously since becoming an ambassador.”

-“It helped me learn a lot about UK as an institution.”

Professional development. Along with expanding networks and knowledge, the ambassador program enhanced the participant's resumes which in turn helped them secure opportunities to build their resume even further. Internships are a crucial part of the college experience, as it not only helps the student gain valuable real-world work experience, it also allows the student to become a competitive candidate when they start their career search. Several current and past ambassadors mentioned how the program abetted them to receive scholarships and internships:

-“Yes. I strongly believe that my involvement in the ambassador program helped me to receive scholarships and internships during college, and enhanced my resume in applying for (and receiving) my job after college.”

-“Yes. It boosted my resume which helped me to get into a very selective post grad program.”

-“Yes, I believe it helped me gain entrance into an internship program because of the well-rounded student that it developed me to be.”

Pushed outside comfort zone. Pushing students outside of their comfort zone is another way they can gain self-confidence in college. The ambassadors are encouraged to try new things, experience a different culture, understand someone who is completely different than themselves, etc. In every situation they encounter, whether that is a recruiting event or just a casual get together with other ambassadors, it is an unwritten goal to get at least one person to try something new. Maybe it is the way they approach an answer to a prospective student's question, or something as simple as ordering something exotic off of a restaurant menu. Some respondents mentioned that they were pushed outside of their comfort zone:

-“Definitely, if nothing else it got me out of my comfort zone, enabled me to be a part of the college, and introduced me to tons of great people.”

-“The ambassador program taught me to put myself out there. I was pretty shy and reserved; I think I still am to a degree. But I learned that in order to do the right and the best thing, I had to sometimes get out of my comfort zone. That's how I got an [internship] my junior year; I went and sought out people to accept me. And how I needed up in my degree program I am in.”

-“YES! I have become more outspoken and have really fine-tuned my leadership skills. I have had the amazing opportunity of planning a large-scale event and have really stretched outside of my comfort zone.”

Leadership development. Part of becoming a student leader on campus includes growing in the capacity to lead others, as well as having a positive influence on others in the form of a mentor, a superior, or a peer. The UK CAFE Ambassador Program strives to develop student leaders within the college and some participants specifically mention that being in the program helped them to positively influence others in a variety of ways:

-“Serving as an ambassador completely changed my experience at UK. It allowed me to become more involved and be a leader on campus and a mentor to other students.”

-“Being an ambassador, I was portrayed as a leader in everything that I did. Students would turn to me for advice. My experience was great with some great ambassadors.”

-“Yes, I have been able to speak at various events representing both myself and the college. I have been able to reach out to prospective students and assist with their college selection process.”

Part of becoming a leader within the ambassador program encourages the students to pursue other opportunities to demonstrate their skills and abilities they have learned. One of the questions asked the participants if they had taken on any other leadership roles after becoming an ambassador. Out of 48 respondents, 44 (92%) said they have pursued other leadership roles after becoming an ambassador, and only 4 (8%) mentioned that they had not. These other leadership roles could have been during their time as a student, or even after during their career. The UK CAFE Ambassador program has successfully contributed to student leader development by providing students with opportunities to develop.

No direct effects. Only 3 people indicated that the program did not lead to any direct effects on their lives during and after they participated in the program. With any program, student organization, or voluntary based commitment, it is often up to the individual involved to make the most of their situation. It could have been that these particular people did not take advantage of the opportunities that were presented to them, or that they found this program was not as effective as they had anticipated. They asserted this by stating:

-“Being an Ambassador is looked at very highly among employers as well as teachers but it did not help me obtain any opportunities thus far.”

-“Not directly, but I felt like it helped me learn to communicate better with others which has helped me in professional roles.”

Community engagement. Giving back to the community is often a part of developing as leader. Involvement in this program gave many ambassadors the opportunity and built a sense of responsibility within them to contribute their knowledge and skills upon the community. This also led them to create a sense of pride to be representatives of a large college and university within a greater community. They expressed these feelings by statements like:

-“Beyond being a great learning experience, serving as an ambassador really was an outlet from my studies and a way to feel like I really was a contributing member of my community.”

-“Some of my best memories are with the CAFE Ambassador program. I have developed lifelong relationships with fellow ambassadors and with CAFE faculty. Ambassadors has been a way for me to give back to the college.”

-“I made many good friends and great memories. I was proud to represent my college and university.”

Opportunity to travel. Amongst some of the fun benefits of the ambassador program, traveling is one most participants are able to partake in. Along the same lines as encouraging these student leaders to get out of their comfort zone, traveling is the most popular way they are able to accomplish that. Traveling allows the students to see how the agriculture industry operates in other places, allows them to meet new people, and allows them to appreciate other cultures. There is a tremendous amount of traveling that occurs in the responsibilities of the ambassadors and some had mentioned how this is a way they have been impacted by the program. Examples of these accounts include:

-“Yes, it allowed me to meet so many people and has provided opportunities to travel and learn about agriculture in ways that I otherwise wouldn't have been able to.”

-“Yes. During my time in the program I had the opportunity to travel, see production operations, make friends, and further my education within the College of Agriculture.”

-“I think the Ambassador program helps opens doors to careers and opportunities. Since you are the face of the college as an Ambassador, you have the opportunity to travel and meet prospective students, other ambassadors from out of state, and UK alumni. These networking opportunities open doors for personal relationships as well as future business relationships.”

Table 3.4—Did the Ambassador Program specifically help you obtain opportunities during or after college? If yes, in what way(s)?
Yes, it allowed me to meet people in the agriculture industry that led to job and networking opportunities.
Yes, meeting various people in the college. I got [in] a bad accident my final semester and had to repeat it the following year and those same people helped make sure I got everything needed.
Yes. During my time as an ambassador I was able to gain connections to help me with my future career. Meeting these individuals has served as a resource for me to help with my career.
Yes. The ambassador program opened up many doors. It has allowed me to spread the word of agriculture, which I have discovered is one of my passions. It also has given me the opportunity to have the possibility of becoming a Peer Mentor.
Yes. I strongly believe that my involvement in the ambassador program helped me to receive scholarships and internships during college, and enhanced my resume in applying for (and receiving) my job after college.
Yes, I have been able to speak at various events representing both myself and the college. I have been able to reach out to prospective students and assist with their college selection process.
Yes, the Ambassador Program allowed me to expand my network, particularly with the faculty and administration in the College of Agriculture. My involvement in the program led to speaking engagements and career opportunities down the line.
Yes, I was able to speak to participants of our Rotary Day at Roundup. I was also able to meet and work with various families and students who helped me grow as a person. It also gave me the opportunity to grow closer with people on the ambassador team that I probably wouldn't have if I hadn't had the opportunity to be an ambassador.
Yes, as an ambassador I was able to network with influential alumni and, in doing so, it led me to an internship with the company I work with today.
Yes, as an ambassador I had the opportunity to meet and network with people that I would not have met otherwise. As a recent graduate, being an ambassador not only looks good on my resume, but it has given me many experiences to talk about with prospective employers (organizing events, speaking in front of groups, promoting the college, leadership, etc.)
Not directly, but I felt like it helped me learn to communicate better with others which has helped me in professional roles.
Being an Ambassador is looked at very highly among employers as well as teachers but it did not help me obtain any opportunities thus far.
It has opened doors for job opportunities and the ability it reach out to various individuals for research
Help expand my network
Yes, I think it opened doors via new conversations with potential employers, and allowed me to have more confidence in front of a group of new people.
Yes. The Ambassador Program helped me make connections with professors, other faculty, and other students. These connections later helped me jump into future opportunities that I otherwise would not have known about or would not even have known to ask about. This is beyond the opportunities that I have had thanks to the skills I acquired and/or developed during my time as an ambassador.
Yes! I was able to meet more employers.
The Ambassador program helped me obtain a job after college; I was able to talk in front of many people. They were also impressed about the quality of the ambassador program and what it offered.
No

Table 3.4 continued
The ambassador program taught me to put myself out there. I was pretty shy and reserved; I think I still am to a degree. But I learned that in order to do the right and the best thing, I had to sometimes get out of my comfort zone. That's how I got an [internship] my junior year, I went and sought out people to accept me. And how I needed up in my degree program I am in.
Having companies speak at our meetings and introducing us to them led directly to an interview and now my career with that company.
Yes. It boosted my resume which helped me to get into a very selective post grad program.
Through the Ambassador program, I was introduced to a UK alum who helped me get started in my current career.
Yes, it allowed me to meet so many people and has provided opportunities to travel and learn about agriculture in ways that I otherwise wouldn't have been able to.
As much as anything, the ambassador program helped me connect with the CAFE staff and be looked upon as a leader by them. This led to many opportunities during college and some after.
Yes. I was able to network with students and alumni. I was able to learn more about agriculture which I am passionate about. This experience improved my communication and leadership skills in numerous ways that I am truly thankful for.
Yes, by helping me become a Peer Mentor and giving me networking opportunities with administrators and staff.
Yes. I was able to become an ambassador for my graduate school program.
it allowed me the opportunity to meet people from all different walks of life, and allowed me to expand my knowledge of agricultural related topics
Yes. I got to meet the Dean and other administrators
Definitely yes. The connections I made across the state helped me to network and identify my true passions for my future. As a future physician, most of my advice and even letters of recommendation stem from the Ag college.
Yes. I had the opportunity to meet new people and connections that led to a career in teaching agriculture.
It was a huge resume builder along with it allowed for networking within the ag industry I could not have gotten anywhere else.
Yes. During my time in the program I had the opportunity to travel, see production operations, make friends, and further my education within the College of Agriculture.
Yes, I met the recruiter for my employer after graduation at Ambassador Summit in New Orleans the year before the interview.
Without a doubt. The Ambassador program changed my college career. I was on the track to being a shy, few friends college student until I joined the Ambassador program. When I did this, I was able to interact and become friends with some of the students in the CoA that I'd respected and looked up to. I opened up, gained more confidence, and was introduced to all of the different opportunities past college. I got so much help on my resume at Resumania, something I would have never attended had it not been for being an Ambassador.
Yes--It opened doors to meet people particularly from the alumni association that gave me advice along the way to finding a career path as well as making connections as far as networking.
Yes, I believe it helped me gain entrance into an internship program because of the well-rounded student that it developed me to be
Yes. The leadership roles that I participated in allowed me to receive [an award] as the CAFE representative for UK. I received a dietetic internship to become a dietitian from my leadership experiences. I also got the opportunity to be a [volunteer] member this year.

Table 3.4 continued	
Yes. The Ambassador program helped me grow as an individual and become a more outgoing person and form connections with others.	
Not specifically	
Yes, I was able to work with different agricultural groups throughout the state while in college. After college, I was able to pursue a career that works closely with the same agricultural groups like Farm Credit and Kentucky Farm Bureau.	
No	
This program helped me to gain familiarity with the College of Ag and thus helped me in my role as an Extension Agent.	
lots of networking. Helping get new kids interested and involved so that down the road, i can hire them	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	45

Table 3.5—How did serving as an ambassador contribute to your UK experience?

It allowed me to share my love for my college with others.
It allowed me to better understand agriculture and its importance. I'm a city girl and was studying landscape architecture so I was very much removed from agriculture
Friends and connections that were made
Serving as an ambassador made me really understand UK as a whole. I was kept up on current events throughout the university and also was a part of many large events representing the university. My love for UK has grown tremendously since becoming an ambassador.
Being an ambassador made my UK experience. My best friends from UK, my favorite professors and faculty, my love for the campus all developed as a result of being an ambassador.
Some of my best memories are with the CAFE Ambassador program. I have developed lifelong relationships with fellow ambassadors and with CAFE faculty. Ambassadors has been a way for me to give back to the college.
Serving as an ambassador made me feel connected to the rich family environment in the College of Agriculture even though I was not a traditional ag major. Without this program, I would have been very far removed from specific Ag events and administration.
It was a goal of mine to become an ambassador so I worked hard to have the opportunity to become an ambassador. The experience helped me grow up and meet other ambassadors and faculty on campus which helped me as a student and now are contacts for me as an alumni.
Absolutely. It helped expose me to other facets of the agricultural sector. I consider myself an ambassador for the ag industry today, building upon what I was able to learn as a College of Ag Ambassador.
It was one of the highlights. I am very proud to have been an ambassador. It got me even more involved and taught me a lot about leadership and time management.
It gave me a great community in the College of Ag and a sense of pride and responsibility to better the college. It was one of my favorite activities while in college.
Serving as an ambassador made me feel closer to the CAFE and it made me feel like a leader on a very large campus.
it allowed me meet a variety of individuals
I got to attend and serve at events that not all students got to go to.
Allowed me to become more of a well-rounded student and to contribute to the new students of UK CAFÉ
Beyond being a great learning experience, serving as an ambassador really was an outlet from my studies and a way to feel like I really was a contributing member of my community.
Made me meet many more people in the college!
It helped me meet people outside of the clubs and major that I was in and learn about different aspects of the College and Professors. As an Ambassador I got to travel to Preview nights and show youth how great the College of Ag was and all the opportunities that it offered students.
It helped me learn a lot about UK as an institution.

Table 3.5 continued
Being an ambassador taught me servant leadership. We were the ones who the college could call upon to do anything: show one family around campus in an intimate setting where they are free to ask questions, talk to a high school class about the whole host of opportunities available in the college, or meet and greet alumni at events. We were always there to make sure these little and sometimes big things in the college went off without a hitch. It was pretty awesome how we came together and worked as a team. Mind you, we were all pretty involved in campus life...I think most of us were presidents of other organizations or at the very least heavily involved upper class men in rigorous courses, but we all took the time away to help out our college. We were building the community by recruiting and educating future generations of college students. Being an ambassador taught me that being a UK student was more than just getting a degree, it was helping other students, prospectives, and/or alumni know that the UK was more than a college, it was a place you could call Home.
Interact and work with individuals with other disciplines within the college that otherwise I would most likely had never crossed paths with.
It opened many doors in helping with community and college activities. It led to a job with the College of Ag while at school and I met many important leaders across campus.
It got me more involved therefore more passionate about the mission of CAFE.
As a transfer student ambassador, the program made get to know colleagues and professors better.
I felt like I was a major player in the UK CAFE while I was an ambassador. Since we are meeting new students daily, I was able to share my passion for my school with them!
It allowed me to open up and find a home in this university and this college. Being an ambassador has been one of the best parts of my college experience!
Hands down, the close friendships I made with many of the other ambassadors was the best part of being an ambassador. Being an ambassador helped to further my understanding of, commitment to, and fondness for the college. It helped me meet many students, a great many potential students, and staff of the college that I would not have interacted with otherwise.
It made my experience exceptional. My experience as an ambassador made UK my home away from home. Now when I come to Lexington, it's like I'm home again. The people I met and impacted through my experience are unforgettable.
It is my favorite organization to be part of! It has given me new friends and opportunities that I wouldn't have had before.
I became so much more involved and made a ton of new friends that I wouldn't have done without the program.
I loved being able to expand my network through the ambassador program. Not only did I meet 20 something new people, but I started meeting their friends...
I enjoy telling potential new students about my experience at UK and how much I love this school! Ambassador program allowed me to do this.
My ambassador team became my family and support system, and helped me achieve my goals through friendship, mentorship, and keeping my positive in times of discouragement.
It was a great opportunity I am glad that I took part in.
Yes very much so! They became some of my best friends
It made me more aware of opportunities, programs, faculty, and other student organizations that I was able to participate in.
It helped me expand and learn more about the college that I didn't know before coming here. I appreciate more diverse parts of the industry and my fellow students that work in it.
I made lifelong friends and gained skills I'll use forever. I still tell people about some of my Ambassador stories.

Table 3.5 continued	
I walked away from college with a feeling of support--like from a FAMILY. there is no better support group on earth during, as well as after, college, than the college of ag family, specifically the ambassador group.	
It has introduced me to my best friends and has allowed me the opportunity to develop a love and passion for agriculture.	
Being an ambassador, I was portrayed as a leader in everything that I did. Students would turn to me for advice. My experience was great with some great ambassadors.	
Serving as an ambassador completely changed my experience at UK. It allowed me to become more involved and be a leader on campus and a mentor to other students.	
Helped develop me as a person, got to make more friends, network with people.	
It made me more involved in all aspects of the College of Ag and the university. It also allowed me to go outside of my comfort zone to talk to others.	
I made many good friends and great memories. I was proud to represent my college and university.	
It made campus feel smaller since there was a core group of students I regularly met with.	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	46

Skills development. Also included under the category of impact were responses that mentioned the specific skills which were enhanced or improved by being a part of the ambassador program, see Table 3.6. . These particular answers were identified because the participant directly mentioned one or more of the eleven skills that the program seeks to develop. Although through the Likert scale questions, the results show no significance between the skills developed and the ambassador, the participants self-reported statements about how they grew has validity. Only one out of the ten skills tested did not have a specific mention in any of the responses recorded, that skill was “accountability.”

By far the skill with the highest amount of mentions, at least 35 times, was **public speaking**. Many of participants either mentioned that the ambassador program allowed them to become a better public speaker or that the program cured them of being shy in front of large groups of people. Becoming a better public speaker not only helps them gain confidence when talking to a particular community, but it also helps them become

more socially inclined when working with others. Public speaking is one of those skills that can be applied to many different facets in someone's personal or professional life.

Remembering how this program helped them, the participants included statements like:

-“Yes. I feel like the ambassador program really helped me to be comfortable with public speaking. I no longer get super nervous to talk to a group of people in which I do not know. I feel as if I am better at starting a conversation with others as well.”

-“Yes. I can talk in front of large groups of people. I am more educated about agriculture and can help educate others. I can easily relate to others as well. I am more outgoing and motivated.”

-“Yes it taught me how to speak more confidently in front of others and how to start a conversation with anyone and immediately find common ground.”

The second most mentioned skill, mentioned at least 20 times, which associates with public speaking, was **confidence**. Past and current ambassadors reflected about how the program pushed them to gain confidence in themselves while learning how to develop other skills, and applying their confidence in new situations. With any leadership program self-reliance is imperative to teach, and not surprisingly this ambassador program has fulfilled that for many people. The participants reveal how they built their confidence throughout the program:

-“Yes, I gained comfort in situations that prior to, would have been nerve wracking such as public speaking, giving an elevator speech, impromptu speaking, etc. I am far more confident introducing myself to others. I am sure of

myself, my background, and my path forward. These skills were most definitely honed throughout my time as an ambassador.”

-“It allowed me to gain experience and confidence leading and speaking to unfamiliar people, and adapting to changing environments.”

-Yes, I have been able to be more outgoing and more willing to talk to complete strangers about something that I am passionate about. As an ambassador I was able to tell my ag. college story and that has helped me to continue to share my passion for that along with other things.”

In a program that strives to build student leaders, **leadership** is a skill that is highly sought after and continues to be at the forefront of any task or event that the ambassadors encounter. Leadership signifies different things for different people, and can be seen as an all-encompassing skill, meaning being a leader includes the person having confidence, professionalism, knowledge, etc. Some of the participants revealed how this leadership led to other improvements they were able to accomplish:

-“Yes, I feel that my leadership skills have been strengthened, and that I have developed my own personal leadership style.”

- I became a better person. Not just a better speaker, leader, and teammate, but an overall greater person of integrity and open-mindedness to help others.

-“Absolutely. I developed leadership skills, honed teamwork skills, gain confidence in my ability to lead, and made valuable connections.”

With today’s ever-changing society, students who are representatives of a college need to be able to realize everyone brings a different perspective to the table, no two people are exactly the same, and it is important to embrace these differences in people.

Being able to work successfully in groups requires the ambassadors to **appreciate the diversity** amongst them. This not only leads to better collaboration, but also a sense of inclusiveness which becomes fundamental in a team setting. One goal of the ambassador program seeks to embrace the diversity that creates this group of students and for many people it has helped them develop as a better person. They disclose how they developed an appreciation for diversity by stating:

-“ Yes. I developed my speaking and presentation skills (which greatly improved my teaching ability, as well), I learned to not just respect but also to value the opinions of and work with people who had viewpoints different from myself, and I learned how to be more diplomatic in a variety of situations that called for it.”

-“ Yes, public speaking and being able to better relate to people with very different backgrounds from my own.”

-“ Yes, it was helpful in making me talk to anyone that I did not already know. I can now start a conversation with anyone that I encounter. It has also taught me to value others opinions.”

-“ Yes. Taught me how to work with people that are not like me.”

The skill of **citizenship** encourages people to become responsible members of their community, whether that is the university community or the community outside the university. The ambassador program was successful in creating that sense of being a part of a community, and in return the ambassadors were able to give back to their communities in a variety of ways. Past and current ambassadors mentioned how they were able to acquire their skill of citizenship:

-“ Yes, communicating better with others, carrying a role in my community, creating a family type atmosphere in a professional setting.”

-“ Greatly. More event planning and community service activities along with stronger public speaking skills and learning to listen to what questions potential students had.”

-“It opened many doors in helping with community and college activities. It led to a job with the College of Ag while at school and I met many important leaders across campus.”

Gaining the knowledge and information about the college and the university is a crucial part to becoming an ambassador. If nothing else, the ambassadors were provided with a wealth of knowledge to help them in their recruiting duties. Being able to retain and effectively articulate the information back to the public is necessary for many of the events the ambassadors participate in. The ambassador’s responses about the knowledge they collected shows how the program influenced their ways of thinking:

-“Yes, because I learned more about different majors other than my own. I was able to grow in my ability to talk with people from different backgrounds which has helped me with my career in lending.”

-“The Ambassador Program helped me with public speaking. I was knowledgeable with the information which built my confidence.”

-“It has helped me become more diverse in my ways of thinking and knowledge of agriculture. This will help me in my future FCS career and in developing strong, innovative partnerships and goals.”

A skill that pairs with confidence and knowledge is **professionalism**. Being able to know how to act politely and use good judgement in certain situations is a skill that instilled in the ambassadors as they are not only representing themselves, but the college and university as well. By learning how to act professionally the ambassadors are better prepared for their careers ahead, as well as having the potential to influence their other peers to do the same. In the goals to prepare these students for their futures, the ambassadors mention how this program has accomplished that:

-“Having a deeper connection with the college of ag has only been beneficial for me professionally. I think that the ambassador program paired with many other experiences in college helped me with everything from public speaking to dealing with social situations, etc.”

-“It made me a better communicator and public speaker, allowing me to acquire better interview skills.”

-“Yes. The program helped me feel more prepared for the professional world and for my career.”

Some of the lesser mentioned skills were time management, teamwork, recruitment, and accountability. This is not to be confused with skills that have less value within in the program, just that these skills were not directly mentioned many times within the responses given. Most of the responses that included these skills also encompassed other stronger themes, and as a result they were integrated into the responses above.

Table 3.6—Did/do you feel the ambassador program helped you develop skills for your future? If yes, in what way(s)?

Yes, I felt much more comfortable leading people through tours and in helping in an advisor role.
Yes, public speaking and being able to better relate to people with very different backgrounds from my own.
Yes. I developed leadership, public speaking, and confidence.
Yes. I feel like the ambassador program really helped me to be comfortable with public speaking. I no longer get super nervous to talk to a group of people in which I do not know. I feel as if I am better at starting a conversation with others as well.
Yes, in more ways than I could ever have imagined. I learned how to respect people with opinions different than my own. I improved my public speaking skills, my networking abilities, and learned how to work well with older adults in positions of power, such as professors and administration. I also took the skills I learned from being an ambassador to my future job where I created a drug prevention version of the Ag Ambassador program for middle and high school students.
Yes, I feel that my leadership skills have been strengthened, and that I have developed my own personal leadership style.
Yes, I gained comfort in situations that prior to, would have been nerve wracking such as public speaking, giving an elevator speech, impromptu speaking, etc. I am far more confident introducing myself to others. I am sure of myself, my background, and my path forward. These skills were most definitely honed throughout my time as an ambassador.
Yes, because I learned more about different majors other than my own. I was able to grow in my ability to talk with people from different backgrounds which has helped me with my career in lending.
Yes, by forcing me out of my comfort zone, the Ambassador program has allowed me to succeed in the corporate agricultural business by well-representing myself well in front of leaders within the industry. Through preview nights, alumni events, prospective student tours, etc., the Ambassador program exposed me to many different social situations with facility members, alumni, students, concerned/skeptical parents, etc.
Definitely, if nothing else it got me out of my comfort zone, enabled me to be a part of the college, and introduced me to tons of great people.
Yes, communicating better with others, carrying a role in my community, creating a family type atmosphere in a professional setting.
Yes. I am not worried as much about speaking in front of people, it also helped me with time management skills as well as what it takes to be committed to something.
yes, it public speaking
Public speaking, networking skills
It allowed me to gain experience and confidence leading and speaking to unfamiliar people, and adapting to changing environments.
Yes. I developed my speaking and presentation skills (which greatly improved my teaching ability, as well), I learned to not just respect but also to value the opinions of and work with people who had viewpoints different from myself, and I learned how to be more diplomatic in a variety of situations that called for it.
Yes! The ambassador program has helped me speak in front of large and small groups.
Yes, it was helpful in making me talk to anyone that I did not already know. I can now start a conversation with anyone that I encounter. It has also taught me to value others opinions.

Table 3.6 continued
Yes, public speaking and presenting skills were an integral part of the ambassador experience and developing those further helped me feel comfortable speaking publicly on a regular basis now.
Oh absolutely. Public speaking/speaking to groups of students/faculty is a major part of my current job (PhD student). I didn't really love speaking to groups of people I don't know (maybe the introverted engineering coming out a bit), but the ambassador program broke me out of my shell and really made me comfortable.
Greatly. More event planning and community service activities along with stronger public speaking skills and learning to listen to what questions potential students had.
Yes. It helped me to communicate with people that I did not previously know.
The Ambassador Program helped me with public speaking. I was knowledgeable with the information which built my confidence.
I think the Ambassador program helps opens doors to careers and opportunities. Since you are the face of the college as an Ambassador, you have the opportunity to travel and meet prospective students, other ambassadors from out of state, and UK alumni. These networking opportunities open doors for personal relationships as well as future business relationships.
Yes, leadership and teamwork skills. It's allowed me to increase my communicative skills.
Having a deeper connection with the college of ag has only been beneficial for me professionally. I think that the ambassador program paired with many other experiences in college helped me with everything from public speaking to dealing with social situations, etc.
Yes. I can talk in front of large groups of people. I am more educated about agriculture and can help educate others. I can easily relate to others as well. I am more outgoing and motivated.
It has helped me become more diverse in my ways of thinking and knowledge of agriculture. This will help me in my future FCS career and in developing strong, innovative partnerships and goals.
Yes. I am now able to give a speech on the spot in front of a large group of people.
It has allowed me to feel more confident in speaking in front of groups, both large and small, that aren't made up of my peers.
It made me a better communicator and public speaker, allowing me to acquire better interview skills
Yes improved Public speaking skills
I became a better person. Not just a better speaker, leader, and teammate, but an overall greater person of integrity and open-mindedness to help others.
I further developed skills such as working with a team, public speaking, and being organized.
Absolutely! The program was influential in helping me understand fully the scope of the ag industry nationwide.
Yes. The program allowed me to develop into a better leader and to become more confident in my abilities.
Yes it taught me how to speak more confidently in front of others and how to start a conversation with anyone and immediately find common ground.
Public speaking, one on one interaction, adapting, answering questions on the spot, honesty, integrity, and so many more
Yes--I was always social and a good speaker but after being an ambassador I noticed a huge decrease in anxiety when speaking in front of a large crowd or new people
YES! I have become more outspoken and have really fine-tuned my leadership skills. I have had the amazing opportunity of planning a large-scale event and have really stretched outside of my comfort zone.
Yes. Taught me how to work with people that are not like me.
Yes. The program helped me feel more prepared for the professional world and for my career.

Table 3.6 continued	
Yes, it helped me get recruiting skills, how to speak to people who are unsure about what they are doing in the future.	
Yes, I have been able to be more outgoing and more willing to talk to complete strangers about something that I am passionate about. As an ambassador I was able to tell my ag. college story and that has helped me to continue to share my passion for that along with other things.	
Absolutely. I developed leadership skills, honed teamwork skills, gain confidence in my ability to lead, and made valuable connections.	
This helped me become more comfortable talking to groups	
Yes, i met new people that I otherwise wouldn't have spent time with.	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	47

To answer the second part of the research question, this section will include statements in which the current and past ambassadors felt there needed to be improvement in various areas, see Tables 3.7-3.8 Regardless of how many years a program has been running; there is always room for improvement. Changing environments and goals call for an adaptive way of thinking for the progressing future of the program. The goal with these statements is to inform the current advisor and stakeholders of the program to understand how it can better serve its ambassadors, so that they can better serve the college. To some people these suggestions for improvement will be viewed as negative aspects of the program; however some may view it as encouragement to develop the program and its participants.

Program Improvement

The themes that were identified to help improve the program were (see Table 3.7): more professional/career development; better/clearer communication; reevaluate course grading/accountability; closer group dynamics/more social events; more training/knowledge of the industry; would like to see changes in the advisor; more involvement with alumni; increase the amount of events; main campus involvement; weekly log online ; emphasis on community service; more interaction with Ag and HES;

keep it fun; nomination process/knowledge and recruitment for the program earlier.

Oddly enough most of the themes for improvement align with the themes of impact mentioned above. This could mean that the ambassadors perceived their experiences to be powerful, but there was some room for growth.

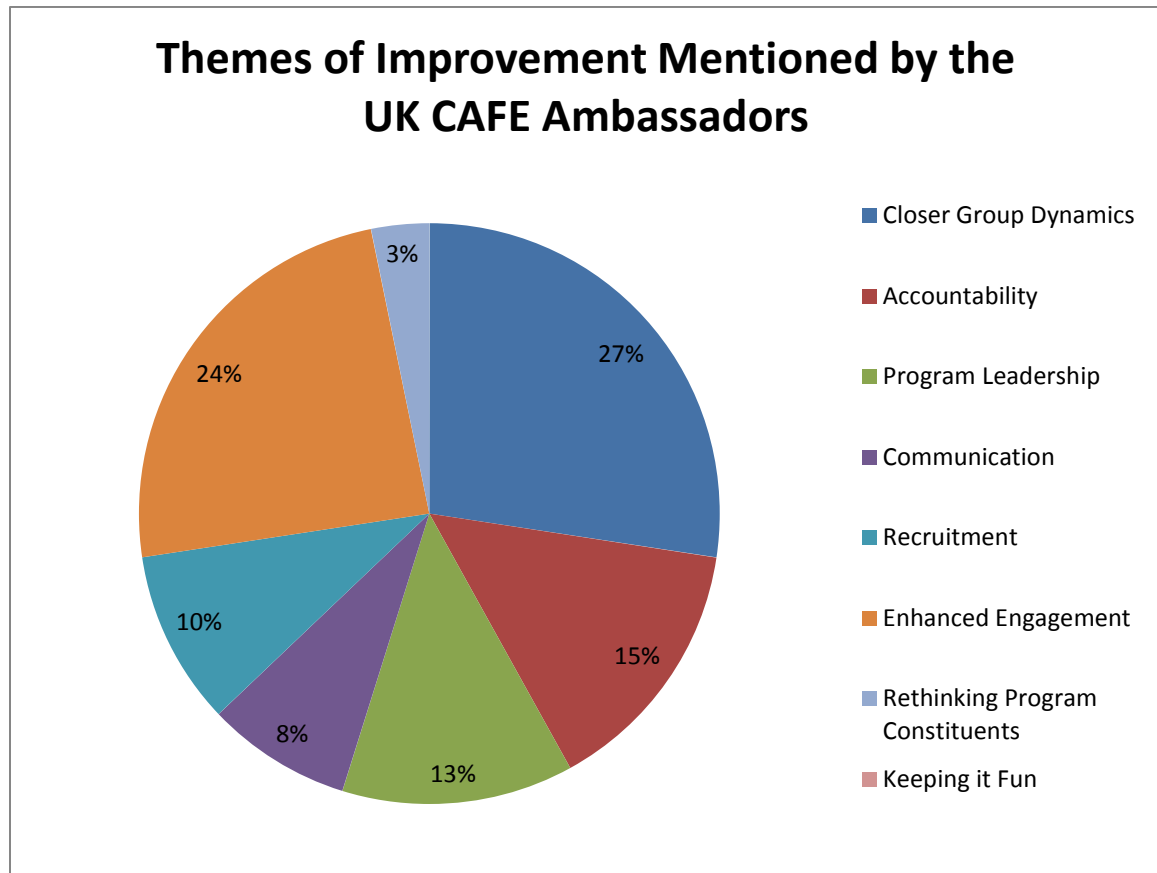


Table 3.7: Themes of Improvement Mentioned by the UK CAFE Ambassadors

Closer group dynamics. The theme that acquired the most was ambassadors would have liked to have a closer group dynamic and encouraged adding more social events. In order to have a productive group it is important that everyone gets to know each other, and everyone supports each other. This is never an easy task since everyone has their own way of approaching different social situations, but there is a need to

accomplish this cohesive team from the very beginning of the school year. The ambassadors expressed their thoughts by saying:

-“I would have tried to focus on inter-ambassador relationships, having more events where we all could regularly get together instead of just at morning meetings.”

-“Make sure to create a collective group feeling. If the ambassadors don't feel as if they know each other, they won't feel as invested in the group.”

-“Work on strengthening the group's "togetherness" I would have loved to have hung out with more ambassadors outside of ambassador events.”

Accountability. The next largest theme for improvement of the program was encouraging the reevaluation of how the course is graded and encouraging a better system for accountability. As part of the incentives of the ambassador program, the participants are given a one-hour course credit and grade at the end of every semester. The points they received throughout the semester are calculated based on the events they attended, responsibilities they accomplish, etc. and they are called “PAWS” which stands for “Points Awarded While Serving.” The accumulation of a certain amount of points equals the letter grade they will receive in the course. These points are supposed to hold the ambassadors accountable for participating in events and contributing to the groups, which are each worth a different amount of points. Some find that this systems needs to be evaluated, due to uneven weights being pulled throughout the group. They shared this insight by explaining how it should be changed:

-“1. Not make it points based; I think the Ambassador program should not be something for students to stress over which is what points are doing to the

program. I think that everyone should be involved as much as possible but the program should be more volunteer based instead of grade based. The Ambassador program is a service to the college 2. Have an electronic schedule of some sort along with the book signing.”

-“I would have reconfigured the PAWS grading system, and I would have found better, more effective ways of keeping ambassadors active during the mid-semester slump.”

-“I think accountability for everyone on the team is important. I think there is always room for improvement in motivating every team member.”

Program leadership. The advisor of the program plays a crucial role in how this program is run and how it accomplishes its goals. Again, there is not going to be the perfect advisor who always knows the answer to every question, or who always provides all the opportunities that the ambassadors may need, but knowing how to fix these downfalls only provides a stronger base for the program. This is not a negative reflection on the quality of work and effort that the advisor puts into this ambassador program, but areas of needed improvement to strive for a better program. Some participants recognized that the advisor may need to work on some skills of their own as well. They expressed their concerns by stating:

-“I would work to have a full and complete background in agriculture. I would also make sure to trust the input from my students without trying to go about things in my own way.”

-“I think the program is not what it was when I was applying 3 years ago. It was an honor and the question was never if one should apply but if they thought they

were good enough to get in. Being an ambassador was a feeling of stress at times but then sincere appreciation to make it all worth it. It was never about making myself better but making the college and the programs better. When I was lucky enough to get in at the end of my freshman year I was looking forward to 3 years of growth in my knowledge of the college and experiences to get those students that needed to come here to come. I believe this is not ambassadors anymore. The program is held up on making grades and everything is numbers: how many tours, how events, how many preview nights. These are all important, yes, but I have personally seen a decline in morale so apparent that potential new ambassadors ask if it's even fun anymore. A One year stint as ambassadors is a disservice to the college. I am a better ambassador now than I was 3 years ago simply based on experiences and class schedules each semester allowing me to pick up different events and gain more time with various groups. I also believe communication is a problem. There are more last minute tours, or at least tours announced for need of an ambassador, the day of than ever before. I hope it is apparent that I truly love this program and those that have made it great all these years, and that passion for the college is what brings me to type all the issues I see in hopes that they can be fixed before it hurts those coming in."

-“Organizational skills are a must. In my opinion, the Ambassador Advisor could be a full-time position within CAFE if enough emphasis is put on the program. I became an Ag Ambassador b/c I remember my first tour of the Ag College by an Ambassador when I was a prospective student. It's a critical program for the College to maintain!”

Communication. Another theme of improvement that needs to improve between the students themselves as well as between the ambassadors and their advisor is communication. The program is invested in making its participants better communicators, but it is one of the things that the program seems to lack within itself. Improving communication throughout the program will foster a sense of organization, togetherness, and competence. Without strong and effective communication within a group, it makes it difficult for everyone to work collectively toward their common goals. They encouraged refining the communication within the group by articulating:

-“I would have made sure to have a better communication system. Although I always knew about upcoming events it often felt impersonal and disconnected from the group as a whole.”

-“I would have had a better handle on the organization of the ambassadors as a whole. I believe there was potential for closer bonding, networking, and participating in more events had the group been slightly smaller or communication been clearer.”

-“I would have given ambassadors more notice about events.”

Recruitment. Knowledge about the ambassador program and recruitment into the program is helpful when selecting the right people for this opportunity. Since this program is based on nominations from other ambassadors, faculty and staff of the college, it is important that the nominees know what they are being encouraged to apply for. Knowledge about the program earlier in their collegiate career was suggested to have possibly strengthened the program. The past and current ambassadors pointed out that there needs to be some type of filter on how ambassadors are nominated to help with

the future of the program. They expressed dislike for how many people nominated their friends which led to unwanted “cliques” within the group. Examples of these statements include:

-“Spoke to college freshman about what the ambassador program is and how to get more youth interested in it.”

-“Recruit as many applicants as possible and hype up the program. This should be the most sought after organization in CAFE.”

-“I would help the ambassadors who were transfer students a little more. When I was an ambassador, I felt that everyone already knew each other and I was the outlier. Also during the interview process, I would have encouraged the previous ambassador's to nominate someone who truly improves the program and not their friends.”

-“I would of not been so lenient in letting ambassadors friends become a part of the program because that made the program seem only exclusive to friends and the students began to form "cliques" which can make other ambassadors that don't know anyone VERY uncomfortable.”

Enhanced engagement. Many of the ambassadors expressed their desire to have more events to attend, which included recruitment events, alumni events, and skill development events. These are the ambassadors that pursued other ways to help them grow even more within the program. All of these suggestions are certainly noteworthy when looking at improving the program, as well as its participants and the college. Adding more events calls for additional work to be done by the advisor and the ambassadors, but after seeing the number of responses that included this theme,

mentioned at least 25 times, there is evidence to suggest that the ambassadors want more from the program. They encouraged adding more events by expressing:

-“Be consistent throughout the year and keep the ambassadors informed and motivated. Maybe have a Midyear retreat to get everyone pumped up and focused again, along with having the retreat right before school starts. More community service should be implemented and an annual fundraiser.”

-“I would provide more opportunities for the ambassadors by interacting with alumni at more events. I would also like the ambassador to perform more community service and maybe do an annual fundraiser.”

-“More personal and career development opportunities/workshops for ambassadors- targeted at post-graduation. So much time was focused on being at UK, being a part of the college and recruiting future students that I think there were limited discussions or preparation for what comes next. As a leadership program I sometimes felt it was too oriented at us being the face of the college for recruitment purposes or to help get more funding from alumni that is skimmed on the leadership training and development part.”

-“I loved the ambassador program as it was however I mentioned an idea in my ambassador interview that never got implemented that is a good idea---I think the ambassadors should get with the alumni assoc and once a month (or a few times a semester, however often it may be) and have a successful alum of the college come speak to the current students. It is a great way for students to network, to see what it's like to be an alum (which later will benefit the college directly), and to

see what possibilities as far as career goals are possible to obtain upon graduation.”

-“I think that I could have been a little more focused on recruiting new students, and trying to have the Ambassadors do more together socially, to create a tighter knit group.”

-“I would have initiated more travel experiences, or simply networking events outside our college. I feel like though many ambassadors learn about the "Ag stuff", they have a hard time connecting it with reality, and in turn have harder times portraying the passion they have as an Ag student.”

-“Place more value on the team-building aspects of the ambassador program. Teach ambassadors how to intelligently talk about common "hot-topics" in ag. GMOs, GM, GE. Pesticide use. Animal Agriculture. Organic Ag. Sustainable Ag. Also, how to handle conflict around these issues.”

Rethinking program constituents. The UK CAFE Ambassador Program includes students who are enrolled in the traditional agriculture based program and students who are enrolled in broader social science programs in the School of Human Environmental Science (HES) such as Hospitality, Tourism and Management or Family Science. Some ambassadors feel that there is a need to separate the two groups for the program to accomplish its mission. They also express their desire for more interaction between the two groups of students since it may be hard at times to view them as one cohesive group. This issue comes along with the suggestion to work on having a closer group dynamic:

“More interaction between the HES and heavy Ag side of campus / Worked towards making the book an online process.”

-“I truly believe there should be HES ambassadors and Ag ambassadors. This would strengthen our recruitment and make everyone more comfortable when giving tours and going to meeting. I believe this would benefit prospective students and ambassadors much more.”

Keeping it fun. Lastly, a great piece of simple advice encourages for the program to be fun, “keep the program fun I know that it is a professional program but if it's not enjoyable and is taken too serious you will lose the interest of the students participating.” It is important to remember that this program is there to help benefit the college, but it is as equally as important to remember that this program is building student leaders as well. Unless the participants are having fun, they are going to choose to not be a part of the program, which does not help them, but it also does not help the college either.

Table 3.8—Say you had been the coordinator for the Ambassador Program, what would you have done differently?

I would have tried to offer professional development for the ambassadors.
I can't think of anything actually.
I would have communicated more.
I would have reconfigured the PAWS grading system, and I would have found better, more effective ways of keeping ambassadors active during the mid-semester slump.
I would have had a better handle on the organization of the ambassadors as a whole. I believe there was potential for closer bonding, networking, and participating in more events had the group been slightly smaller or communication been clearer.
I would have a mandatory class instead of a meeting that was optional. Also work on the number of preview nights you had to attend and getting that schedule out earlier.
Organizational skills are a must. In my opinion, the Ambassador Advisor could be a full-time position within CAFE if enough emphasis is put on the program. I became an Ag Ambassador b/c I remember my first tour of the Ag College by an Ambassador when I was a perspective student. It's a critical program for the College to maintain!
Can't think of anything right off- I was there during a transition period so things were hectic but I think they were handled well.
I would have made sure everyone felt prepared and comfortable. I would have provided more training and more information about tours and specific majors so everyone felt comfortable with EVERY major.
hard to say
Include more alumni activities
I think that I could have been a little more focused on recruiting new students, and trying to have the Ambassadors do more together socially, to create a tighter knit group.
Please don't change it! I miss the UK Ambassador Program so much! I actually have been working with the advisor of the Ambassador Program at my current university, and she has been trying to incorporate some ideas from the UK Ambassador Program into my current university's program. There are always little nit-picky things that annoy us (for instance, some ambassadors had a tendency to let the others carry their slack a bit, so a better accountability system would have been nice). But, I promise this was not a bad problem at all, especially in comparison to other programs I have seen and other groups I have worked with. The system worked fantastically for the College and for the Ambassadors, both.
1. Not make it points based; I think the Ambassador program should not be something for students to stress over which is what points are doing to the program. I think that everyone should be involved as much as possible but the program should be more volunteer based instead of grade based. The Ambassador program is a service to the college 2. Have an electronic schedule of some sort along with the book signing
I would have given ambassadors more notice about events.
I hated not meeting regularly. [The advisor] did his best, but we didn't get together often enough. I know Arizona did like a 7am meeting...that would have sucked but would have been better than not getting together. Just hanging out with such a diverse group and chatting was so beneficial. I also feel like I didn't know about all of the clubs/events going on in Ag campus. As an engineer...I sometimes felt excluded from the group in that aspect. It seemed like everyone else always knew things I didn't.

Table 3.8 continued
More personal and career development opportunities/workshops for ambassadors- targeted at post-graduation. So much time was focused on being at UK, being a part of the college and recruiting future students that I think there was limited discussions or preparation for what comes next. As a leadership program I sometimes felt it was too oriented at us being the face of the college for recruitment purposes or to help get more funding from alumni that is skimmed on the leadership training and development part.
Spoke to college freshman about what the ambassador program is and how to get more youth interested in it.
Nothing comes to mind at the moment. [The advisor] was very good at his job.
I would help the ambassadors who were transfer students a little more. When I was an ambassador, I felt that everyone already knew each other and I was the outlier. Also during the interview process, I would have encouraged the previous ambassador's to nominate someone who truly improve the program and not their friends.
I would have tried to help increase the number of high school visits the ambassadors planned.
I would have tried to focus on inter-ambassador relationships, having more events where we all could regularly get together instead of just at morning meetings.
I might have made an effort to make the college of ag and the ambassadors more visible on main campus in recruiting good students to the college. This is a difficult question as I am several years out at this point, but largely I would not have changed much.
I would provide more opportunities for the ambassadors by interacting with alumni at more events. I would also like the ambassador to perform more community service and maybe do an annual fundraiser.
I honestly don't know. Everything has gone well in my opinion!
More interaction between the HES and heavy Ag side of campus Worked towards making the book an online process
Been more organized with assigning tours and been more educated about the agriculture industry, majors, and academic programs.
I would have initiated more travel experiences, or simply networking events outside our college. I feel like though many ambassadors learn about the "Ag stuff", they have a hard time connecting it with reality, and in turn have harder times portraying the passion they have as an Ag student.
I don't feel that the group of ambassadors were very close. I would make sure everyone knows each other and spent more time on getting to know each other.
No
I would have made sure to have a better communication system. Although I always knew about upcoming events it often felt impersonal and disconnected from the group as a whole.
I would have made it more service oriented instead of hanging on to a grade to have people motivated to work.
It's hard to say what would need to be done differently, because I had a wonderful experience. But I can see the benefit to some sort of system where everyone gets equal treatment. Sometimes the Ambassadors who didn't do as many tours or as much work, still got to participate in all the fun things because we wanted a large group, or because we enjoyed that person's personality.

Table 3.8 continued	
I loved the ambassador program as it was however I mentioned an idea in my ambassador interview that never got implemented that is a good idea--I think the ambassadors should get with the alumni assoc and once a month (or a few times a semester, however often it may be) and have a successful alum of the college come speak to the current students. It is a great way for students to network, to see what it's like to be an alum (which later will benefit the college directly), and to see what possibilities as far as career goals are possible to obtain upon graduation.	
I would work to have a full and complete background in agriculture. I would also make sure to trust the input from my students without trying to go about things in my own way.	
I would have not been so lenient in letting ambassadors friends become a part of the program because that made the program seem only exclusive to friends and the students began to form "cliques" which can make other ambassadors that don't know anyone VERY uncomfortable.	
I don't know	
I think accountability for everyone on the team is important. I think there is always room for improvement in motivating every team member.	
I would have held even more ambassador events.	
no idea	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	41

Table 3.9—Do you have any suggestions or insights to help strengthen the program?

It is hard to know how many points one has. If it is possible, it would be very convenient if the ambassador program could use canvas where the ambassadors could log in to see their "grade" or the number of points they currently have.
I will say, by the time I was a Senior ambassador, I was slightly over the time commitment and repetitive events. Especially the classroom time that oftentimes seemed to be a waste. However, this may have been more a reflection of "senioritis" across the board as opposed to the Ambassador program specifically.
Continue to grow with the college and university!
Place more value on the team-building aspects of the ambassador program. Teach ambassadors how to intelligently talk about common "hot-topics" in ag. GMOs, GM, GE. Pesticide use. Animal Agriculture. Organic Ag. Sustainable Ag. Also, how to handle conflict around these issues.
I'm excited to see the great things that ambassadors will do in the future.
I feel like it works better when the ambassadors create a "family." The more connected you are the better you work together as a team.
I truly believe there should be HES ambassadors and Ag ambassadors. This would strengthen our recruitment and make everyone more comfortable when giving tours and going to meeting. I believe this would benefit prospective students and ambassadors much more.
keep the program fun i know that it is a professional program but if it's not enjoyable and is taken to serious you will lose the interest of the students participating
I think the [advisor] needs to be closer with the Ambassadors, and seen as a lot less of a dictator. I understand that he is the professor for the class, but I think that [the advisor] was a friend, and I can't say that I necessarily feel the same way now.
Keep up the great work!
I think it's very important for ambassadors to get to know fellow ambassadors. They all know more about you in something. Use that as a resource.
Recruit as many applicants as possible and hype up the program. This should be the most sought after organization in CAFE.
Choose new ambassadors that are not the already existing ambassador's friends.
Work on strengthening the group's "togetherness" I would have loved to have hung out with more ambassadors outside of ambassador events.
Be consistent throughout the year and keep the ambassadors informed and motivated. Maybe have a Midyear retreat to get everyone pumped up and focused again, along with having the retreat right before school starts. More community service should be implemented and an annual fundraiser.
Don't stress the point system. Some ambassadors that care and work hard do not have enough time to earn the points
More time for bonding within the ambassador group
Make sure to create a collective group feeling. If the ambassadors don't feel as if they know each other, they won't feel as invested in the group.

Table 3.9 continued	
<p>I think the program is not what it was when I was applying 3 years ago. It was an honor and the question was never if one should apply but if they thought they were good enough to get in. Being an ambassador was a feeling of stress at times but then sincere appreciation to make it all worth it. It was never about making myself better but making the college and the programs better. When I was lucky enough to get in at the end of my freshman year I was looking forward to 3 years of growth in my knowledge of the college and experiences to get those students that needed to come here to come. I believe this is not ambassadors anymore. The program is held up on making grades and everything is numbers: how many tours, how events, how many preview nights. These are all important, yes, but I have personally seen a decline in moral so apparent that potential new ambassadors ask if it's even fun anymore. One year stints as ambassadors are a disservice to the college. I am a better ambassador now than I was 3 years ago simply based on experiences and class schedules each semester allowing me to pick up different events and gain more time with various groups. I also believe communication is a problem. There are more last minute tours, or at least tours announced for need of an ambassador, the day of than ever before. I hope it is apparent that I truly love this program and those that have made it great all these years, and that passion for the college is what brings me to type all the issues I see in hopes that they can be fixed before it hurts those coming in.</p>	
Making sure the [the advisor] is completely engaged, organized and not over-controlling.	
No 7 am meetings	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	21

Memorable Experiences

When looking at the future of the UK CAFE Ambassador program, it is important to mention what the program is doing well. One of the open ended questions that received responses from all of the survey participants asked what their fondest memory of the program was, see table 3.9 below. This goes to show that even with those participants that chose not to answer some of the other questions; they still took the time to mention a positive memory that they will have forever about their time in the program. By its design the question warranted responses that shed some positive light on how this program is helping influence and improve the ambassadors' lives during their time in the program and after graduation. These statements can be viewed as avenues that the program does well and should continue. These ambassador reflected on memories that includes themes of: Fall Retreat; Round Up; making friends/lifelong connections; going

back to a hometown to do a high school visit; recruiting students; having meaningful prospective student encounters; gaining a renewed energy and love for the college; end of the year cookouts; encouraged to get outside comfort zone; SeeBlue Preview Nights; National FFA Convention; and getting to travel as a group.

The memory that received the most attention was **Fall Retreat**. This is a time where the whole group attends a weekend retreat to accomplish many of the beginning tasks as an ambassador. During the time away they are presented with all the facts and figures they need to know about the program, they are taught how to approach the events and responsibilities they have, and most importantly they are given the time to interact with each other to help achieve that stronger group bond. They expressed this fond memory by stating:

-“The first retreat I went on with the ambassador program. I got to know so many ambassadors, I was introduced to this incredible program, and I felt like I was truly a part of a great organization.”

-“Fall retreat, getting to know everyone and reconnecting with others after a long summer. It’s a great way to start the semester and going out onto Lake Cumberland this year was awesome!”

-“I loved the weekends away at the beginning of the school year when we got to know about the program, meet each other and just get away before everything got started.”

The second most mentioned memory was about the friends and connections they made with others in the program, and how they developed lifelong **friendships**. Being able to interact and connect with their peers, changed some ambassadors’ whole

experience at the university, and it led to some of the best connections beyond graduation. As an ambassador they spend a lot of time together during events and different tasks that they do, so building those bonds with their peers allows them to not only bounce knowledge off of each other, but also help them build confidence in different social situations. The ambassadors remembered these friendships in a variety of different capacities:

-“I honestly can't select a fondest memory because I enjoyed my entire ambassador experience. The friends and connections I made during that time was a large contributing factor to my overall wonderful experience at the University of Kentucky. I am very passionate about the Ambassador Program and am very thankful I had the opportunity to serve in that role.”

-“The friendships that I made will last a lifetime. You get to spend quality time with some quality people in the Ambassador program and I'm so happy I was able to be a part of the group for three years.”

-“The people. I met so many dear, dear friends who I grew to know and love, many of whom I am close with still today.”

Being the face of the college, the ambassadors have the opportunity to interact and meet many new people. One of the most popular events that they participate in every year is **UKAg Round Up**. This event is based on showcasing the college to prospective students, state legislators, the community and the alumni throughout a four day period. It is the largest event that the college puts on, and the largest alumni based event within the university. A majority of the ambassadors remember this time as one of their favorites:

-“Round-Up. Hands down the greatest experience ever. From the ambassador reunion to the pep rally...wow that was awesome. Just to be there in your blue button down everyone knew who you were and wanted to talk to you. Meeting alumni and prospective students...generations of families that were there to have a good time and tell you their life story. Each of those is a fond memory that I really really really loved.”

-“Round Up Week each and every year! I love working with alumni, family, politicians and important figures of the industry throughout the week and showing our appreciation of them while they retell stories of how much the college means to them personally.”

-“I loved the ambassador retreat and working Ag Round Up!”

Also another noteworthy part of being an ambassador is sharing their knowledge and appreciation for the college as they recruit new students. Many of the ambassador reflected on how **recruiting** students was their favorite part of the program. It is often mentioned from prospective students that the interaction with a current student is crucial in helping them make that final decision to attend that particular college. The ambassadors play a very important role in showcasing their experiences as a student.

Their memories of this included:

-“I loved round up and getting to see all the alumni. However, I will never forget a family who thanked me after their tour when I left them with a professor and then found me again after their meeting and shook my hand and thanked me again for helping them. When a family enjoys their experience it made it all worthwhile.”

-“Just hanging out with other ambassadors and talking about life. I really enjoyed sharing about my major with prospective students as well. I was passionate about my major so I loved telling new students about the opportunities available that they may not have thought about.”

-“Ambassador retreat at the 4-H camp in western Kentucky or seeing new freshman on campus that you gave a tour to and were a part in influencing their decision to come to UK and be in the College of Ag.”

Traveling to reach at broad range of prospective students and stakeholders was one of the programs greatest opportunities. These ambassadors have the privilege of traveling throughout the state of Kentucky and throughout the United States to represent UK and CAFE. They reminisce about these times they had to travel:

-“Fondest memory was the people I met along my Ambassador endeavors. The trip down to Florida with [the advisor] and other Ambassador's was fun and you never knew what was going to happen or where we were going to stop. Jason encouraged everyone to do something out of their comfort zone and it made us better ambassadors and people for it.”

-“My fondest memory as an ambassador was participating at the National FFA convention in Louisville.”

-“Going back to my high school and giving a high school presentation and having all of the students be wowed by the facts and information about CAFE was my best memory of the ambassador program.”

Table 3.10-What is your fondest memory of being a part of the ambassador program?

The retreats. I loved the people I got to work with.
The retreats and round up
I honestly can't select a fondest memory because I enjoyed my entire ambassador experience. The friends and connections I made during that time was a large contributing factor to my overall wonderful experience at the University of Kentucky. I am very passionate about the Ambassador Program and am very thankful I had the opportunity to serve in that role.
Going back to my high school and giving a high school presentation and having all of the students be wowed by the facts and information about CAFE was my best memory of the ambassador program.
The people. I met so many dear, dear friends who I grew to know and love, many of whom I am close with still today.
The first retreat I went on with the ambassador program. I got to know so many ambassadors, I was introduced to this incredible program, and I felt like I was truly a part of a great organization.
My fondest memory, where do I start? Sleeping on the Good Barn floor watching Zoolander during my first year orientation, cranking up "The Ambassador" with the windows down riding around Western Kentucky 4H camp, recruiting students at Preview Nights to see them later thrive and graduate from the same program, and remaining in touch with my fellow ambassadors five years later.
I loved round up and getting to see all the alumni. However, I will never forget a family who thanked me after their tour when I left them with a professor and then found me again after their meeting and shook my hand and thanked me again for helping them. When a family enjoys their experience it made it all worthwhile.
Off-campus Ambassador Retreats and events where we were able to bond as a group. It's very important to build that team connection b/c it helps in other situations you're asked to perform in as Ambassadors. Helps to develop rapport between each other and the advisor.
Just hanging out with other ambassadors and talking about life. I really enjoyed sharing about my major with prospective students as well. I was passionate about my major so I loved telling new students about the opportunities available that they may not have thought about.
Ambassador retreat at the 4-H camp in western Kentucky or seeing new freshman on campus that you gave a tour to and were a part in influencing their decision to come to UK and be in the College of Ag.
Being able to go to Cincinnati for the first time ever through a preview night!
meeting new students and gaining a renewed energy for my love of the college
The friends I was able to make through the program. Fellow ambassadors, staff, and alumni.
End of the Year Cookouts at [the advisor's] house
All of the friendships I made and the people I met
Being able to give tours to families and help them find their college home
Fondest memory was the people I met along my Ambassador endeavors. The trip down to Florida with Jason and other Ambassador's was fun and you never knew what was going to happen or where we were going to stop. Jason encouraged everyone to do something out of their comfort zone and it made us better ambassadors and people for it.
Retreats!
Round-Up. Hands down the greatest experience ever. From the ambassador reunion to the pep rally...wow that was awesome. Just to be there in your blue button down everyone knew who you were and wanted to talk to you. Meeting alumni and prospective students...generations of families that were there to have a good time and tell you their life story. Each of those is a fond memory that I really really really loved.

Table 3.10 continued
All of the friendships gained that are still very strong today.
Serving at Ag Round Up
My fondest memory as an ambassador was participating at the National FFA convention in Louisville.
The friendships that I made will last a lifetime. You get to spend quality time with some quality people in the Ambassador program and I'm so happy I was able to be a part of the group for three years.
Fall retreat, getting to know everyone and reconnecting with others after a long summer. It's a great way to start the semester and going out onto Lake Cumberland this year was awesome!
The friendships were certainly what made the program so special. I genuinely enjoyed talking with high school students about their interest in the college. Group outings and trainings are probably some of my best memories.
I loved the ambassador retreat and working Ag Round Up!
I enjoyed learning everyone's personalities at the retreat! The campfire and games we played helped us mingle so well. I felt comfortable from the start.
Getting to know everyone for the first time at retreat.
The trip to red river gorge!!!
The retreat to mammoth cave was my favorite memory.
New Orleans. Enough said.
I enjoyed the college fairs that we attended. I enjoyed speaking to potential incoming freshman students and their parents. Honestly, this is the only thing I really remember doing as an ambassador besides tours of the college.
Representing UK at the National FFA Convention
I loved the weekends away at the beginning of the school year when we got to know about the program, meet each other and just get away before everything got started.
Round Up Week each and every year! I love working with alumni, family, politicians and important figures of the industry throughout the week and showing our appreciation of them while they retell stories of how much the college means to them personally.
When we planned and hosted LEAD, and RoundUp. RoundUp as an Ambassador is even more fun, and that was something I didn't think was possible because I've always loved RoundUp.
Ag round up of course!! Actually--I will never forget retreat weekend when we went to the gorge and stayed in those cabins. Sitting around a bonfire after a day of adventures and fellowship. Nothing like it.
When we were driving to retreat and every car started going faster than ours, and [one driver] was like, "bye bye [other driver]!"
I really enjoyed the beginning of the year retreats and the preview nights. Those traveling times were golden!
My fondest memory is all of the connections I made with my professors and instructors in the college of agriculture and the friendships made within the program.
Ambassador Retreat, Preview nights
I enjoyed being part of the Ag Ambassador family. Each person that I was able to work with and faculty became a tight-knit group that worked together to move the college in a positive direction.
The trip to Arizona.
Retreat
I miss [the advisor]

Table 3.10 continued	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	46

These responses throughout the results section are only a glimpse of the ideas, memories, and reflections that the current and past ambassadors had about their time in the program. Based on the reflections, see Appendix C, the participants of this survey continued their leadership roles in other student organizations after becoming an ambassador; overall they were pleased with their experiences in the program; and would encourage others to join the program as well.

Other questions based on informational purposes for the future of the program asked the ambassadors to indicate what events they felt they had the most and least impact, what skills they believe they built while being in the program, and if this program was something they would encourage others to be a part of. To view the complete set of responses to these open ended and ranking questions, see Appendix D.

Chapter Four - Discussion

With how the survey was presented to the participants and the results that stemmed from the responses it seems as if there are conflicting opinions whether UK CAFE Ambassador program is building student leaders. For example a student, who was an ambassador for three years, reported little to no change or even sometimes declared there was change in the opposite direction for the Likert scale statements, but expressed that during their time as an ambassador they build skills of “[...] public speaking and being able to better relate to people with very different backgrounds from my own.” This student also indicated that teamwork, professionalism, recruitment, knowledge about UK and CAFE were the top skills they had developed during the program. Examples like this student and about 18 another participants, implied that the Likert scale questions were not a reliable indicator of how or if these students developed. However, the participants’ self-reported statements are the strongest gauges to illustrate how this program is developing student leaders, because without prompting their responses included references of the specific skills this study sought to assess.

What these Likert scale statements and open ended responses do share for the conclusions of this study is that every single person that goes through this program gains a completely different experience. From the current results and only having empirical data, there cannot be generalizations made about this program and about what the participants gain from it. Although the goal was to show how the UK CAFE Ambassador program as a whole develops student leaders, this study encouraged evaluation of the different perspectives and experiences each participant had. There is evidence to show that this program has changed the lives for most participants, but it is important to

remember that every single person who goes through the program is going to have a different level of impact. Some were affected by this program tremendously, others not as much. This could also be associated with those to who had an invested interest in taking the opportunities that were presented to them, and those who may not have gotten what they expected out of the program.

The SCM model was used as a foundation to create a new model that would reflect a logical depiction of how the skills developed in the ambassador program are dependent on one another. The arrows on the model show that there is a reciprocating effect that occurs between each category. Being successful in one category requires the work of skills in another category. For example, the group dynamics depend on the individual skills of the leaders who make up the group, and vice versa, the individual skills can be dependent on the involvement within the group. This model has provided a visual of which skills the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is successful in its efforts to develop with the students who participate, and where the program may need to build.

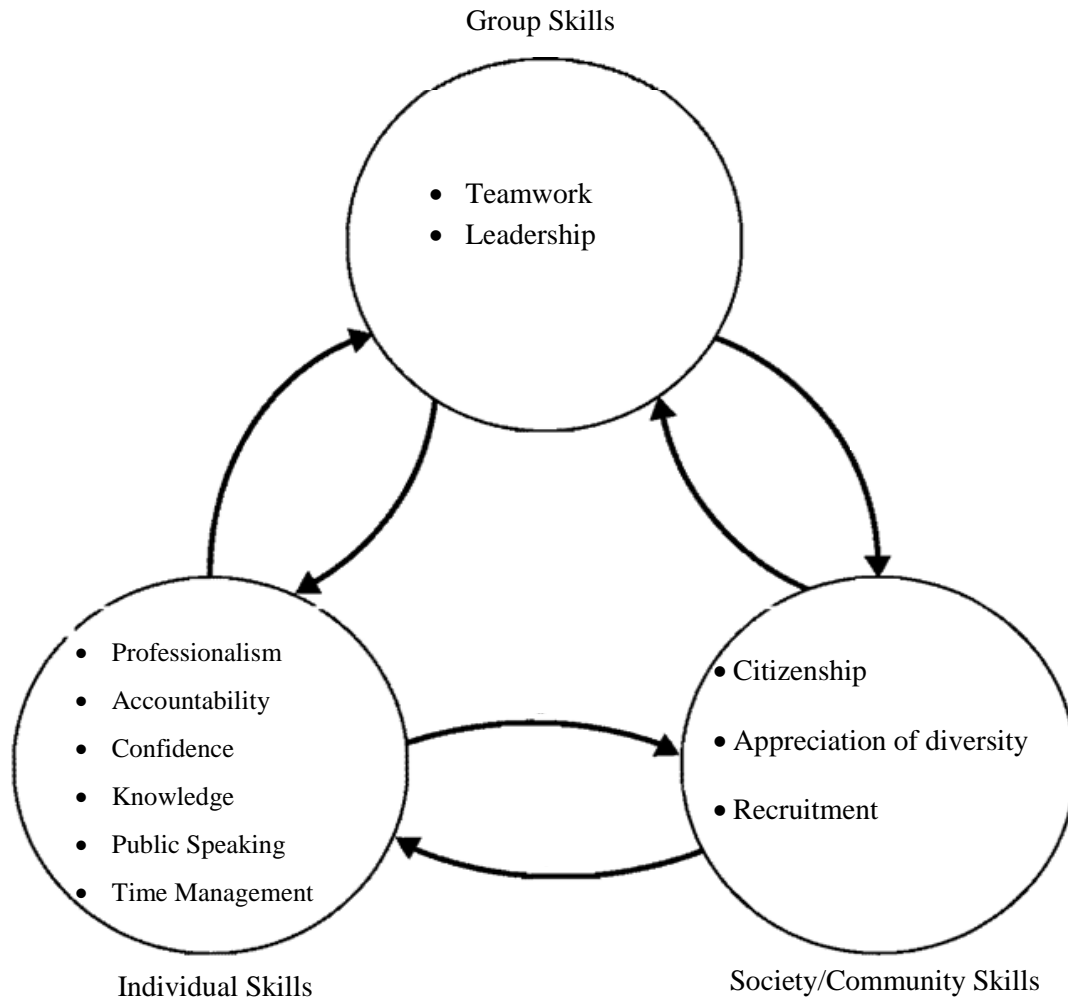


Figure 4.1: Skills within the Social Change Model of Leadership

Through the various responses given by the participants it can be concluded that the UK CAFE Ambassador Program thrives in developing the student's individual skills. Knowledge about UK and CAFE, and public speaking were the two most mentioned skills in both the open ended questions and the miscellaneous questions. Out of the six individual skills in individual category, four were at the top of the list of developed skills mentioned most by the ambassadors. From this discovery the program advisor can evaluate all the tasks and events the ambassadors are required to participate in and continue to create such opportunities for the ambassadors.

The weakest category, in terms of least mentioned by the ambassadors, was the group skills. Teamwork and leadership are skills within the group category that the ambassadors and the program, as a whole, need to work on refining. Recognizing that closer group dynamics was one of the themes for improvement of the program, it would be in the best interest of the program advisor to make it a priority to work on those types of changes. As the leadership development student organization it is essential that this program refocuses some of the major components to reflect where the participants see a needed change. See Table 4.1 for comparison of skill categories.

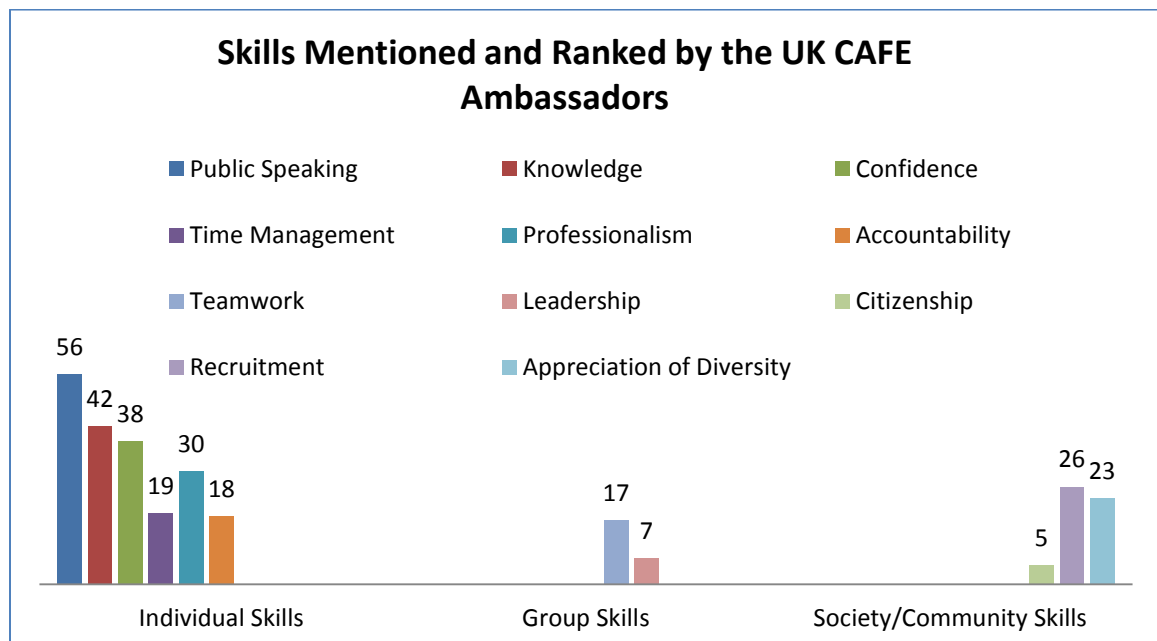


Table 4.1- Skills Mentions and Ranked by the UK CAFE Ambassadors

This program seeks to obtain students who somewhat already display their abilities and commitment to the college. It may be the case for some students to already have the skills of confidence, time management, public speaking, etc. and this program helps them to refine and perfect these skills, and present them with different obstacles to utilize them. For example, a student, who as an ambassador for only one year, indicated

a majority of “strongly agrees” for their responses to the Likert scale statements and with little to no change. It would be presumed that this student was sought after because they displayed those qualities attractive to the program. When asked what they were able to gain from the program, they responded with positive comments, “[...] if nothing else it got me out of my comfort zone, enabled me to be a part of the college, and introduced me to tons of great people”; “[i]t was one of the highlights. I am very proud to have been an ambassador. It got me even more involved and taught me a lot about leadership and time management.”

The future of the program and how it serves the students, as well as the college, does rely on the inputs and suggestions given. These suggestions for improvement will help the advisor understand what it is that the students want to see happen. It can be difficult for the ambassadors to express their ideas or frustrations to other ambassadors or to the advisor because of the uncomfortable place it might put them in. Being able to express opinions anonymously in this survey has given the participants the opportunity to be open and honest about what they believe needs to change. Every person has a different opinion on what they perceive is the best way to operate for the program, and it is important for the advisor to take all of these into consideration when moving forward. It is ultimately up to the advisor to make the decisions for the collective group. The suggestions for improvement are to inform the advisor and the other stakeholders involved what they can do to help these students to continue to strive for excellence.

Lastly, there was one quote given by a participant that successfully put into perspective what this program is about:

“Being an ambassador taught me servant **leadership**. We were the ones who the college could call upon to do anything: show one family around campus in an intimate setting where they are free to ask questions, talk to a high school class about the whole host of opportunities available in the college, or meet and greet alumni at events. We were always there to make sure these little and sometimes big things in the college went off without a hitch. It was pretty awesome how **we came together and worked as a team**. Mind you, we were all pretty involved in campus life...I think most of us were presidents of other organizations or at the very least heavily involved upper class men in rigorous courses, but we all took the time away to **help out our college**. We were **building the community** by **recruiting and educating** future generations of college students. Being an ambassador taught me that being a UK student was more than just getting a degree, it was helping other students, prospective [students], and/or alumni know that the UK was more than a college, it was a place you could call **Home**.”

Chapter Five - Conclusions

Methodological Limitations

All limitations serve as an opportunity to improve for the future. Since the UK CAFE Ambassador Program has never been fully evaluated in the 25 years it has been at the college, there was a need for this survey. Also, with a change in advisors this past fall semester, an evaluation was crucial in aiding the new advisor with recommendations for the future of the program. In order to receive the type of results that were desired, the current advisor can use a new methodology to evaluate this program, while using the same questions asked in the present survey.

Given the situation, the Likert scale portion of the survey was the main limitation. The first issue was asking the participants to think back to their freshman year in college, and for some that may have been almost ten years ago. Even though these statements were prompted with clues to help them think back to their freshman year, it is likely that they responded with memory biases. The next limitation of the survey was creating a retrospective question in one consistent survey. This survey must be broken into two pieces. Ideally, the first part of the survey should be given to the ambassadors at the beginning of their time serving, and then next portion of the survey should be given at the end of the student's time as an ambassador. The new model would include a different time the survey is offered, as well as a new Likert scale delivery method. Since past ambassadors were already targeted in the present survey, they would not to be asked to participate again. The only ambassadors that would be relevant to inquire about again would be the current ambassadors who will be serving in the next school year. It would be beneficial to ask them to fill out only a portion of the survey.

The first portion of the Likert scale questions should be given at the beginning of the student's time as an ambassador since they would only be one to three years from being a freshman in college. The rest of the survey should be given at the end of the student's time as ambassador. It would be beneficial to continue to offer this survey every year to the graduating seniors. Also, keep a constant record of the results each year, with the purpose of the advisor to tweak some events or put more effort into creating more opportunities for the ambassadors. In order to receive the type of results that were desired, the current advisor can use a new methodology to evaluate this program, while using the same questions asked in the present survey. For any program that seeks to develop students, a consistent evaluation is necessary to ensure the program is persistent in fulfilling its goals.

Another limitation to this study was the length of the survey. Typically, when people agree to participate in surveys they prefer it to take 5-10 minutes at the most, this survey was prompted to take anywhere from 15-20 minutes with multiple open ended questions. Creating a shorter survey may have helped with a higher response rate and with more of the surveys being completely finished.

Future Suggestions

After analyzing the impacts and the suggested improvements for the UK CAFE Ambassador program, there are multiple avenues of valuable information that can help strengthen this program. Having personally been involved in this program in a variety of different capacities, first as an ambassador for three years, then as the advisor's assistant, and lastly as the advisor for a short period of time, I believe that this program has the potential to be the most beneficial and useful program on the UK campus. First and

foremost, listening to ambassadors' concerns and wants for this program will help build it up. These suggestions include:

- Creating a new accountability system- This program requires a lot of time and effort on the ambassadors' part and working as a team is most important, but it is the frustration of many that some ambassadors do not put in as much effort as others do. This is the reason for the PAWS system, but it seems as if involvement within the program is solely based on points received at the end of the semester. Instead of requiring the ambassador to receive a certain amount of points for a particular letter grade, I think the class should have the "Pass/Fail" option. Given this option, I think the ambassadors will not be stuck doing events because they have to receive so many points, but attending events because they truly have an invested interest in it. Advisor observations of student investment can be used to gauge whether or not the ambassadors pass or fail the class.
- Closer group dynamics- This organization consists of students who have a wide array of interests, backgrounds, goals for the future, and ideas. They are all a part of this organization because they want to represent CAFE and UK. As a collective group they need to make sure they are creating an inclusive environment for every single person. The program does focus on teambuilding at the Fall Retreat, but there needs to be continued team building activities or events throughout the year as well. I think a midyear mini retreat would help this as well. Encouraging the ambassadors to form study groups, go out to dinner, or take part in events in Lexington as a group,

will help them form a closer bond. Having this closer bond only benefits the progression of the program. Another suggestion that would help bring this group closer together is encouraging the ambassadors to support each other in the other clubs or organizations they are a part of. Many of the ambassadors are involved in other activities on campus, and I think it would be impactful if a group of them were to go to an event that another organization is hosting to support their fellow ambassadors. For example, if an ambassador is part of an organization that is hosting a fashion show, research presentation, or fundraiser, I think a group of ambassadors should attend those events to show their support.

- Advisor recommendations- Being the one who manages a program and oversees 25 college students, is not an easy job for anyone; it comes with a tremendous amount of responsibility and tact. As indicated by their open-ended responses, ambassadors surveyed had recommendations on the changes they would like to see the advisor work on as well. Keep in mind this is not a negative reflection on the advisor's quality of work or personality, but areas of needed improvement to strive for a better program. This program is only one responsibility out of many the advisor has within the college; however it is important for the advisor to be engaged and present with the ambassadors at different events or meetings. Being organized is a crucial component to running this program. When the advisor is organized, the ambassadors will be organized which helps events and tasks to run smoothly. Given that those events and tasks are a reflection upon the group and the college, it is

important that everyone is organized. Having open and clear communication with the ambassador group is one of the most important improvements to help with creating a collective group who are all on the same page. The advisor is the ambassador's resource to a wealth of information about the university, the college, and the industries they represent, so it is crucial that the advisor is knowledgeable about all of those aspects, and can also effectively articulate that information. It is also important that the advisor has an open mind about the input the ambassadors have for certain things. The ambassadors will have great insight or different ideas on how to approach something, and they would like to see the advisor take those into consideration when it comes to planning and executing various events; giving them freedom to speak their minds, listening to them, providing them with responsibilities will create trust and a stronger group dynamic.

- Providing more opportunities to grow- The ambassadors would like to see more events where they can represent the college, and practice building their skills. This could be anything from creating community service opportunities, to attending more recruitment events, to being present at more alumni functions, to hosting more social events, or planning professional development seminars. Giving the ambassadors more opportunities to get involved will help with their overall view and attitude of the program, and motivation to be engaged.

Another important consideration is assessing what the college's goals are for this program and creating the opportunities to fulfill those requirements:

- The college administrators need to have clear guidelines of expectations and goals for the program. These guidelines and goals should be a collaboration of various different constituents within the college, since the ambassadors are representing the entire college. By providing these to the advisor as well as the ambassadors, they will have a clearer idea of what is expected of them and a stronger foundation for their purpose with the college. This will help the program grow with the college.

Finally, approaching the advisor to inform them of these issues, and encourage a detailed plan of action that will fulfill the needs and wants of the ambassadors, as well as the college:

- At the beginning of the school year make it a priority to set goals based on the feedback from the ambassadors, in order to help set the tone for the rest of the year.
- Revisit the goals list at the end of every month to make sure the program is working toward accomplishing its goals, and also to not lose sight of the suggestions.

With this evaluation and the proposals the program will make great strides in creating an environment where everyone collaborates toward reaching their objectives. The future of the program relies upon the college to support it, the advisor to manage it, and the students to embrace it.

Appendices

Appendix A—Survey

IDENTIFYING THE CORE ELEMENTS OF DEVELOPING STUDENT LEADERS

You are being invited to participate in a research study about how the UK CAFE Ambassador (formally known as UKAg Ambassador) Program which develops skills within the participating/graduated students to become leaders for the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, as well as post-graduation. This study is being conducted as part of a graduate student thesis by Megan Tennison at the University of Kentucky. She is being guided in this research by Dr. Patricia Dyk.

You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you had/have the opportunity to be a UK CAFE Ambassador for at least 1-3 years of your undergraduate career.

There are no known risks if you decide to participate in this research study. There are no costs to you for participating in the study. The information you provide will help to evaluate the ambassador program, to better understand if it is fulfilling its purpose of developing student leaders, as well as preparing students for future careers. The questionnaire will take about 15-20 minutes to complete. The information collected may not benefit you directly, but the information gathered in this study should provide more general benefits for the ambassador program and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment, to use its resources to better serve the Commonwealth of Kentucky.

If you chose to complete the survey, your response will remain anonymous. IP addresses will not be collected. No one will be able to identify you or your answers, and no one will know whether or not you participated in the study. Individuals from the University of Kentucky and the Institutional Review Board may inspect the anonymous data collected. Should the data be published, no individual information will be disclosed.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. By completing this online survey, you are voluntarily agreeing to participate. You are free to decline to answer any particular question you do not wish to answer for any reason.

If you have any questions about the study, please contact Dr. Patricia Dyk, pdyk@uky.edu or Megan Tennison, megan.tennison@uky.edu, 661-210-7068.

The following questionnaire contains statements about leadership characteristics. As a valued member of the UK CAFE Ambassador Program, **think back to your freshman year at UK!** (Where did you live? Who was your roommate? Did you know anyone when you came to college? What was the first day at college like?) Now, please answer the following questions as you recall being a college freshman...

I was seen as someone who worked well with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I enjoyed working with others toward common goals.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I knew and was comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I knew and was comfortable with at least one fellow student in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I was comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I didn't know.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I knew the purpose and scope of the UK CAFE Ambassador Program.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I struggled when group members had ideas that were different from mine.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I was familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I was well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I was usually the first to volunteer when others called upon someone to lead.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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It was important to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I respected opinions other than my own.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I shared my ideas with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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Being seen as a person of integrity was important to me.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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When I was responsible for an activity, I followed through and completed assignments on time.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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When I agreed to participate in an event, I followed through, was on time, and attentive.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I regularly introduced myself to new people in social situations.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I was able to effectively articulate valuable information.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I could describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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It was important to me that I played an active role in my communities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I believed I had responsibilities to my community.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I regularly gave time to making a difference for someone else.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I was comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I worked well in changing environments.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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Now think about **your experiences as an ambassador**-(Who did you work with? What events got you out of your comfort zone? Who did you meet while representing the College? What events stick out in your mind as the most memorable? What event was your favorite?) Please answer the following questions about the leadership characteristics that may have changed with your involvement...

I am seen as someone who works well with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I enjoy working with others toward common goals.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I know and am comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I can turn to if I have questions or concerns.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I know and am comfortable with at least one fellow ambassador in the college that I can turn to if I have questions or concerns.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I am comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I don't know.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I am able to tell others about what the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is and its purpose.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I struggle when group members have ideas that are different from mine.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I am familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I am well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I am usually the first to volunteer when others call upon someone to lead.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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It is important to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I respect opinions other than my own.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I share my ideas with others.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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Being seen as a person of integrity is important to me.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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When I am responsible for an activity, I follow through and complete the assignments on time.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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When I agree to participate in an event, I follow through; I am on time, and attentive.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I regularly introduce myself to new people in social situations.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I am able to effectively articulate valuable information.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I can describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

It is important to me that I play an active role in my communities

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I believe I have responsibilities to my community.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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I regularly give time to making a difference for someone else.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I am comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
-------------------	-------	---------	----------	----------------------	-------------------

I work well in changing environments.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not Applicable
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In order to best serve this program and its future, we would appreciate your candid feedback to these questions:

Did the Ambassador Program specifically help you obtain opportunities during or after college? If yes, in what way(s)?

Did/do you feel the ambassador program helped you develop skills for your future? If yes, in what way(s)?

Say you had been the coordinator for the Ambassador Program, what would you have done differently?

How did serving as an ambassador contribute to your UK experience?

What is your fondest memory of being a part of the ambassador program?

Please indicate all of the years you served as an Ambassador:

☐ Sophomore

☐ Junior

☐ Senior

Check the top 3 events at which you felt you have had the most impact on prospective students.

- ☐ Prospective Student Roundup
- ☐ UK Preview Nights
- ☐ High school visits
- ☐ Various college fairs
- ☐ National FFA Convention
- ☐ Farm Machinery Show
- ☐ Kentucky State Fair
- ☐ On-campus recruitment events
- ☐ KY State FFA Convention

- ☐ 4-H Conferences
- ☐ Group tours
- ☐ Individual tours
- ☐ Winter Event
- ☐ Other off-campus recruitment events
- ☐ Other_____

—

Check the top 5 skills that you developed that you can attribute to being a part of the ambassador program.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Speaking | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Recruitment | <input type="checkbox"/> Time management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Knowledge about CAFE and UK as a whole | <input type="checkbox"/> Work ethic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professionalism | <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation of diversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Other. Please list |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Team work | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Confidence | _____ |

Thinking back to the skills listed above, which events have had the least influence on your skill development?

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Retreat | <input type="checkbox"/> Student-Faculty Picnic |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Committee meetings | <input type="checkbox"/> Other recruitment events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom time | <input type="checkbox"/> Career Fairs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Roundup Week | <input type="checkbox"/> Giving tours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Winter Event | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking with a diverse audience |
| <input type="checkbox"/> UK Preview Nights | <input type="checkbox"/> Student panels |
| <input type="checkbox"/> High school visits | <input type="checkbox"/> Social events |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Alumni events | <input type="checkbox"/> Professional/leadership speakers |

After becoming an ambassador did you take on other leadership roles?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

Being an ambassador was a good experience, but given the chance I would not serve as an ambassador again.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

I would advise a student to become an ambassador.

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ I don't know

Being an ambassador challenged me to step outside of my comfort zone.

- ☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Somewhat

Please provide any other comments you would like to share about your experience as an Ambassador.

Do you have any suggestions or insights to help strengthen the program?

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey! Your valuable feedback will provide helpful evidence to strengthen the future of the Ambassador Program and the College of Agriculture, Food and Environment. If you would like a copy of the final report please feel free to email me.

Appendix B

B1: Example of Student #43 responses to Likert Scale Statements

Student #43	Before		After	Change (Positive or Negative)
Served as a Junior, & Senior				
I was seen as someone who worked well with others.	Agree	I am seen as someone who works well with others.	Strongly Agree	1
I enjoyed working with others toward common goals.	Agree	I enjoy working with others toward common goals.	Strongly Agree	1
I knew and was comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns	Disagree	I know and am comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I can turn to if I had questions or concerns	Strongly Agree	3
I knew and was comfortable with at least one fellow student in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns.	Agree	I know and am comfortable with at least one fellow ambassador in the college that I can turn to if I had questions or concerns.	Strongly Agree	1
I was comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I didn't know.	Strongly Disagree	I am comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I don't know.	Agree	3
I knew the purpose and scope of the UK CAFE Ambassador program.	Strongly Disagree	I am able to tell others about what the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is and its purpose.	Strongly Agree	4
I struggled when group members had ideas that were different from mine.	Disagree	I struggle when group members have ideas that are different from mine.	Disagree	0
I was familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.	Disagree	I am familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.	Strongly Agree	3
I was well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.	Strongly Disagree	I am well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.	Strongly Agree	4

I was usually the first to volunteer when others called upon someone to lead.	Disagree	I am usually the first to volunteer when others call upon someone to lead.	Strongly Agree	3
It was important to me to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner.	Agree	It is important to me to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner		(Participant did not indicate)
I respected opinions other than my own.	Agree	I respect opinions other than my own.	Strongly Agree	1
I shared my ideas with others.	Agree	I share my ideas with others.	Strongly Agree	1
Being seen as a person of integrity was important to me.	Neutral	Being seen as a person of integrity is important to me.	Strongly Agree	2
When I agreed to participate in an event, I followed through, was on time, and attentive.	Agree	When I agree to participate in an event, I follow through, am on time, and attentive.	Agree	0
I regularly introduced myself to new people in social situations.	Disagree	I regularly introduce myself to new people in social situations.	Strongly Agree	3
I was able to effectively articulate valuable information.	Disagree	I am able to effectively articulate valuable information.	Strongly Agree	3
I could describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.	Disagree	I can describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.	Strongly Agree	3
It was important to me that I played an active role in my communities.	Neutral	It is important to me that I play an active role in my communities.	Strongly Agree	2
I believed I had responsibilities to my community.	Agree	I believe I have responsibilities to my community.	Strongly Agree	1
I regularly gave time to making a difference for someone else.	Agree	I regularly give time to making a difference for someone else.	Strongly Agree	1
I was comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.	Neutral	I am comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.	Strongly Agree	2
I worked well in changing environments.	Neutral	I work well in changing environments.	Strongly Agree	2

B2: Example of Student #3 Responses to Likert Scale Statements and Open-Ended

Question

Student #3	Before		After	Change (Positive or Negative)
Did not indicate years served				
I was seen as someone who worked well with others.	Agree	I am seen as someone who works well with others.	Strongly Agree	1
I enjoyed working with others toward common goals.	Strongly Agree	I enjoy working with others toward common goals.	Strongly Agree	0
I knew and was comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns	Strongly Agree	I know and am comfortable with at least one person (faculty or staff) in the college that I can turn to if I had questions or concerns	Strongly Agree	0
I knew and was comfortable with at least one fellow student in the college that I could turn to if I had questions or concerns.	Strongly Agree	I know and am comfortable with at least one fellow ambassador in the college that I can turn to if I had questions or concerns.	Strongly Agree	0
I was comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I didn't know.	Strongly Agree	I am comfortable speaking in front of a group of 10 or more people who I don't know.	Agree	-1
I knew the purpose and scope of the UK CAFE Ambassador program.	Strongly Agree	I am able to tell others about what the UK CAFE Ambassador Program is and its purpose.	Agree	-1
I struggled when group members had ideas that were different from mine.	Strongly Disagree	I struggle when group members have ideas that are different from mine.	Disagree	1
I was familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.	Strongly Agree	I am familiar with events and activities on the UK campus.	Strongly Agree	0
I was well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.	Strongly Agree	I am well-informed about the agriculture, food and environment industries.	Strongly Agree	0
I was usually the first to volunteer when others called upon someone to lead.	Agree	I am usually the first to volunteer when others call upon someone to lead.	Agree	0
It was important to me to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner.	Agree	It is important to me to develop a common direction in a group in order to get anything done in a timely manner	Agree	0
I respected opinions other than my own.	Strongly Agree	I respect opinions other than my own.	Agree	-1
I shared my ideas with others.	Strongly	I share my ideas with others.	Agree	-1

	Agree			
Being seen as a person of integrity was important to me.	Strongly Agree	Being seen as a person of integrity is important to me.	Strongly Agree	0
When I agreed to participate in an event, I followed through, was on time, and attentive.	Strongly Agree	When I agree to participate in an event, I follow through, am on time, and attentive.	Strongly Agree	0
I regularly introduced myself to new people in social situations.	Agree	I regularly introduce myself to new people in social situations.	Disagree	-2
I was able to effectively articulate valuable information.	Strongly Agree	I am able to effectively articulate valuable information.	Agree	-1
I could describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.	Agree	I can describe my personality to a group of strangers without being nervous.	Agree	0
It was important to me that I played an active role in my communities.	Agree	It is important to me that I play an active role in my communities.	Agree	0
I believed I had responsibilities to my community.	Strongly Agree	I believe I have responsibilities to my community.	Agree	-1
I regularly gave time to making a difference for someone else.	Disagree	I regularly give time to making a difference for someone else.	Disagree	0
I was comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.	Agree	I am comfortable initiating new ways of looking at things.	Agree	0
I worked well in changing environments.	Neutral	I work well in changing environments.	Neutral	0
Check the top 5 skills that you developed that you can attribute to being a part of the ambassador program (participant only indicated 3, instead of 5)	Public Speaking	Confidence	Professionalism	

Appendix C—Ambassadors Reflection on the Program

<u>Ambassadors Reflection on the Program</u>				
	Yes	No	I don't know	N
After becoming an ambassador did you take on other leadership roles?	44	4	0	48
Being an ambassador was a good experience, but given the chance I would not serve as an ambassador again.	9	36	2	47
I would advise a student to become an ambassador.	45	0	3	48














Appendix D—Complete Responses to Other Open Ended and Ranking Questions

D1:













Please provide any other comments you would like to share about your experiences as a UK CAFE Ambassador.
Being an ambassador was the best decision and opportunity I had while at UK.
Being a College of Agriculture ambassador was one of the best experiences of my college career.
Being an ambassador was a good and challenging experience. My fellow ambassadors and staff members pushed me out of my comfort zones at times and helped me grow in more ways than one. I will forever be grateful for my opportunity to be an ambassador for UK CAFE.
It was a critical development step in retrospect.
A question above was confusing, I Would serve as an ambassador again if given the chance. I'm thankful to have been given the opportunity.
I am grateful for the experience and loved being able to represent my college.
Being an out-of-state student as well as an a___major, I felt very out of place within this program. Everyone was very friendly and personable but I felt behind in almost every aspect because I would miss things because of being home during breaks and not knowing about things agriculture related. Many___majors and non-Kentucky students do not know anything about farms, farm animals, or anything having to do with that. I felt that I needed to know all about that in order to be a good ambassador.
This was one of the best opportunities I had as a UK student (and that are saying something!).
This program is one of a kind and I enjoyed being a part of it! I love the people that I met and are still friends with them to this day!
Being an ambassador is an honor and a privilege. I didn't really see it as that when I was an ambassador. I just saw it as doing things because some people thought I should. But the things we did, the things they do, are vital for the college, the university, and the Land Grant Mission.
It was a fantastic experience, changed my career path and should be a competitive selection process.
I really enjoyed it, sometimes it was a lot of hard work, but other times it was a lot of fun!
I highly recommend becoming an ambassador because it is a great honor and experience to be given while at UK.
The college changed a lot from the time I started to now when I graduated. I just hope it didn't change for the worst.
Overall, I enjoyed my experience as an ambassador and would do it again.
I loved the program! I so much enjoyed being able to be a part of the group, and I think of it often with fond memories.
I believe this has been one of the best programs not only in this college, but also in other land grants across the country. It brings out the best and brightest and without getting stuck on a pedestal you are constantly pushed to do better and work with other leaders in the college and community to promote the programs of our college. I truly believe that when run correctly, this program can shape a person's college experience for the better.
Being a UK CAFE ambassador meant the world to me. I had a passion for that college that was so strong I feel like it radiated off of me in public places. I wanted nothing more than for other potential students to be able to live the same college experience that I was able to (not the party scene or the basketball game scene) but the relationships and unbreakable bonds that I made with fellow students and ambassadors transformed my college experience. It wasn't just attending a University for me; it was a whole new life.

I love it!! It has been the best thing to happen to me in college	
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	19

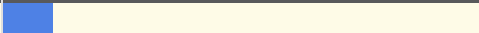


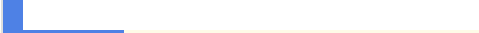

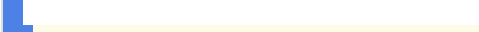
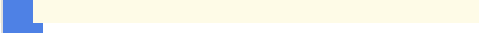

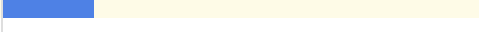



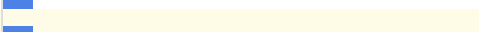
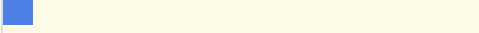

D2:

Check the top 3 events at which you felt you have had the most impact on prospective students.				
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Prospective Student Roundup		19	40%
2	UK Preview Nights		37	77%
3	High school visits		18	38%
4	Various college fairs		1	2%
5	National FFA Convention		7	15%
6	Farm Machinery Show		0	0%
7	Kentucky State Fair		1	2%
8	On-campus recruitment events		8	17%
9	KY State FFA Convention		1	2%
10	4-H Conferences		0	0%
11	Group tours		6	13%
12	Individual campus tours		41	85%
13	Winter Event		5	10%
14	Other off-campus recruitment events		1	2%
15	Other		2	4%
Other				
I spoke with a number of students who were family friends and encouraged them to apply.				
Ag Round Up				
Statistic			Value	
Total Responses			48	

D3:

Check the top 5 skills that you developed that you can attribute to being a part of the ambassador program.				
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Public Speaking		34	71%
2	Recruitment		25	52%
3	Confidence		30	63%
4	Knowledge about CAFE and UK as a whole		36	75%
5	Professionalism		27	56%
6	Appreciation of diversity		15	31%
7	Team work		12	25%
8	Citizenship		2	4%
9	Time management		17	35%
10	Work ethic		4	8%
11	Accountability		18	38%
12	Other. Please list		2	4%
Other. Please list				
Communication skills- small talk/initiating conversation with strangers				
Inclusion				
Statistic			Value	
Total Responses			48	

D4:

Thinking back to the skills listed above, which events have had the least influence on your skill development?				
#	Answer		Response	%
1	Retreat		5	11%
2	Committee meetings		20	43%
3	Classroom time		23	49%
4	Roundup Week		2	4%
5	Winter Event		12	26%
6	UK Preview Nights		2	4%
7	High school visits		3	6%
8	Alumni events		4	9%
9	Student-Faculty Picnic		9	19%
10	Other recruitment events		3	6%
11	Career Fairs		7	15%
12	Giving campus tours		3	6%
13	Talking with a diverse audience		3	6%
14	Social events		8	17%
15	Professional/leadership speakers		5	11%
Statistic			Value	
Total Responses			47	

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